

JAGADGURU SRI RAGHAVENDRA SWAMY





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JAGADGURU SRI RAGHAVENDRA SWAMY

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GADAG

Introduction by
Sri Raghavendra Guru Vamsha Bhushana
Vidyadhiraja - Panditaraja

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Bangalore.

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DEDICATION

We Dedicate this work to the Lotus Feet of His Holiness

SRI SUYAMINDRA TIRTHA SWAMIJEE

AND

His Holiness

SRI SUJAYINDRA TIRTHA SWAMIJEE

Peethadhipatees of

Nanjangud

SRI RAGHAVENDRA SWAMY MUTT

OF

**JAGADGURU SRI MADHWACHARYA MUKHYA
MAHA SAMSTHAN**

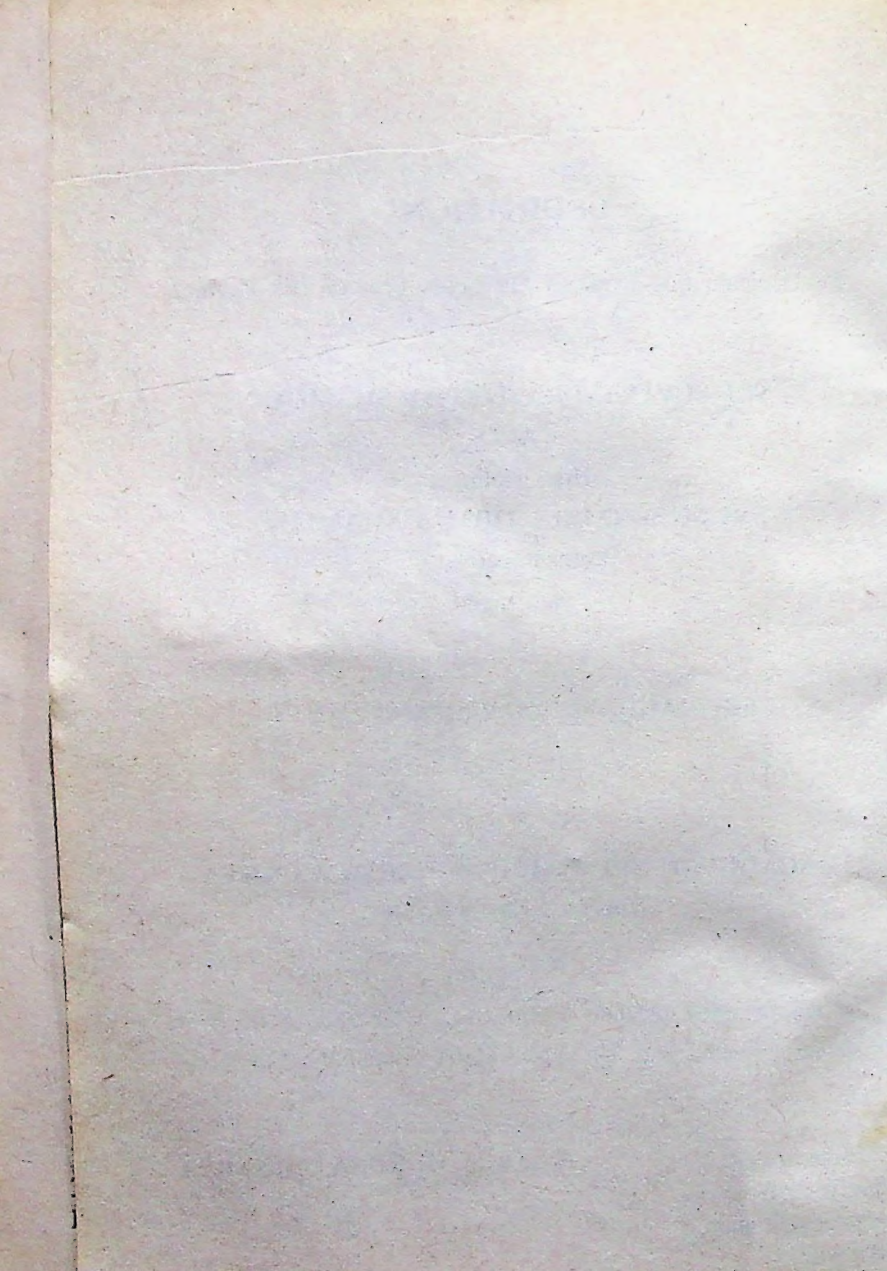
On the occasion of their Holinesses Silver Jubilee of Brindavan Pratistha and The Fifth Maha Samaradha Function.

"Mahasadana"

19-10-1990

Nanjangud and
Bangalore.

RAJA S. GURURAJACHARYA



PUBLISHERS NOTE

We are happy to inform the devotees of Sri Raghavendraswamijee that we are bringing out five books on Sri Raghavendraswamijee of Mantralaya, in English, Hindi, Kannada and Telugu to commemorate the "Silver Jubilee" of The Brindavan Pratistha of His Holiness Sri Suyameendara Tirtharu of and Fifth "Mahasamaradhana" of His Holiness Sri Sujayeendra Tirtharu, Peethadhipatees of Nanjangud Sri Raghavendraswamy Mutt of Jagadguru Sri Madhvacharya Mukhya Maha Samsthan and WE hope the Devotees of Sri Parimalachrya will appreciate our venture.

We are grateful to His Holiness Sri Sushameendra Tirtharu of Sri Mutt for his blessings and help.

We Thank Sri P.R.M.DESAI.....of Vyas.....Press Bangalore for Printing and delivering this work within a short time.

We pray Sri Raghavendraswamy on this auspicious occasion to bless all the devotees with longlife and prosperity.

Deepavali,
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INTRODUCTION

BY

Sarasvathikanthabharana, Vidyavaibhava,
Vedanta Siromani, Sahityalankara, Kavitalaka,
Raja. S.Gururajacharya
Nanjangud

India from the very ancient days is a religious country. Religion in India occupies a unique place and it is not merely one of the social activities but one that is the inner soul of all activities on which it has strongly imprinted its holy seal. "There is an extraordinary thing Like God at whose sweet will this world exists and moves. Man lives at the sufferance of God. Man realising his dependent nature should surrender to the sweet will of God. Vedas are divine orders implicitly to be obeyed by man." -These are some of the important points of religion. Men have lived and practiced these truths from time immemorial. Many sects grew depending upon the teachings of *Veda* leading to different tenets preached by different acharyas at different times. Sri Madhva very truly says* that all the tenets have been there in seed form in the continuity of a current from eternal times. men of different thoughts according to their different nature have chosen different systems for their guidance and have chosen different ends for their realisation in life in the light of their chosen ends.

Thus many ancient religious systems grew up and of them Advaita, Vishishtadvaita and Dvaita are the three im-

* अनदिकालतो वृत्ताः समया हि प्रवाहतः।

portant systems and Sri Madhva is the great protagonist of Dwaita-Philosophy.

Shri Madhva belongs to the thirteenth century. He was born at Pajak Kshetra, near Udipi in south Canara District. GOD Narayana is admitted to be the supreme amongst the GODS. The four faced Brahman is declared in all Puranas as the son of Shri Narayana. In the same manner Vayu also is considered to be the son of Narayanan in Upanishads like Shat Prasna and others. In Kali age God *Narayana* has no incarnations of his own. Brahma also has not been scheduled to descend into the world. So when religion was on the decline due to the spread of materialism in this Kali Age, Shri Narayana ordered his favourite son, *Vayu*, to go to the world and propound a religion in which Narayana is the supreme God and all are but his devoted servants and thus revive the old religion. Accordingly Vayu took the form of Shri Madhvacharya. This is amply proved from *Baliitha Suktha* in Vedas, *Puranas* and *Nadi Granthas*.

Madhva was born of poor parents and his name was Vasudeva. He dreamed even when he was very young, of reviving religion and for that purpose of taking holyorders. His great ambition was to propagate the right sort of knowledge.

Among the many incarnations of God there is one Hamsa or Swan. This is an incarnation for the spread of knowledge and knowledge is its main fact. Sanaka and sanath Kumar and others who have been initiated into the secrets by God *Hamsa* himself (हंसनामक परमात्मा) and have taken holy orders right from their childhood. Durvasa is also the disciple of Hamsa Paramatma. This line of ascetics right from Hamsa Paramatma continued even after Dwapar and by

the time Vasudeva (Madhva) wanted to be a Sanyasi. Achyuta Preksha was the ascetic in this line of Paramahansas. Vasudeva had his Sanyas from this old ascetic and was given the appellation of Poorna Prajna. The great Pandits well versed in the art of polemical disputes called Poorna Prajna as "*Anumana Teertha*" when they saw the versatility of his genius in conducting the disputes strictly following the rules of logic or throughout, Poorna Prajna being no other than Vayu as described in the Vedas, is also Known by the name Madhva and Ananda Teertha and widely called as Shri Madhvacharya.

A few days after taking Sanyasa Madhvacharya had a countrywide tour both in the South and in the North. He interpreted all the sacred books on which the Indian culture is based; Viz. Rig-Veda. Dashopanishad, Bhagavad Geeta, Brahma Sutras, Bharatha, Bhagavatha and Agamas, by writing learned commentaries to facilitate the understanding of the spirit of these sacred books. To attract the attention of the layman to this new interpretation and system and to call forth confidence in him he did many superhuman miracles.

India claiming self revealed Vedas as its sacred books has many systems of philosophy and it is no exaggeration to say that Madhwa's philosophy represents the very essence of philosophy. The following are the tenets of his philosophy:-

He preaches personal God being the highest reality and the supreme ruler of the Universe. God is full of auspicious attributes, rich in qualities unbounded in quantity and intense in quality. He is beyond any disqualification (दोषदूर) The world he has created is another reality though dependent in nature on him. World consists of sentient and insentient

realities set one against another in reference to one another. So all souls are different from God. The existence of a thing prehends difference as it prehends a web of relationship with all other things. God is the encased cause and creates and sustains the world by entering into the real things created. This through Joy of creation he accepts the bonds of creation, without himself being affected, providing opportunities for the growth and perfection of all souls. So world is but a sojourn and one should not be attached to things worldly. Loving intensely the Highest Reality Sri Narayana, one should get his release through his Grace as bondage is the result of His sweet will. These are the main outlines of his philosophy. Those Pandits who did not admit these sane and sober principles most logically propounded and impartially derived from the sacred books were severely criticised by Madhva. Pandits Shobhana Bhat, Shyama Shastri alias Trivikrama Panditacharya came for a dialectical discussion but being defeated and convinced of the eternal truth of Dwaita Siddhanta were converted and became Madhva's disciples. Of the other disputants who were silenced similarly, four were given Holy orders by Shri Madhvacharya.

1. Padmanabha Teertha, 2. Narahari Teertha, 3. Madhava Teertha, 4. Akshobhya Teertha of these, Narahari teertha, at the desire of Sri Madhva went to his own province, Kalinga, and took the reins of ruling into his own hands for many years and while returning he brought back the idols of Mula Rama and Sita Devi that were in the treasury of the ruler of the State and handed them over to Sri Madhva.

These idols were traced back to pre-historic days till at last they are lost in the mists of mythology. The four faced Brahman got these two idols wrought by the heavenly ar-

chitect and worshipped them for many days. The story as gathered from puranas runs thus: Brahma meditated every day on the ten forms of incarnations of Vishnu. One day while meditating on Rama Sri Hari and Laxmi exhibited themselves in the form of these idols. Brahma handed them over to *Jabali* and from him *Mahadeva* obtained for puja. Thus not only gods and sages worshipped these idols but Sri Rama himself accorded them a worship. From that day and for these reasons this idol of Rama is called Mula Rama. These idols had been worshipped by Hanuman, Bhimsena, the previous two births of Madhva and naturally in his present birth also Madhva desired to continue that worships and got them through Narahari Teertha. Besides this Madhva erected a temple at Udipi and installed Sri Krishna which he got from a lump of Gopichandana (a kind of yellowish earth, very holy to Vaishnavas) and appointed eight Sanyasies to worship Sri Krishna and propagate the principles of devotion to Hari, along with the idol of Sri Krishna he had got a pedestal (रजतपीठ) on which were carved ten incarnations of Sri Hari and he got a silver idol of Sri Rama prepared to fit in with that pedestal in shape and size and worshipped it calling it as *Dig Vijayarama*. Thus Sri Madhva who wrote many works, and established many good traditions, threw the heavy responsibility of continuing these traditions of worship and propagation of his tenets on Sri Padmanabha Teertha, his first and beloved disciple. As time approached he vacated his seat for him (Padmanabha Teertha) that is on Magha Suddha Navami day and disappeared from vision while giving his daily lessons. He is believed to be at Badari even today worshipping his direct guru Sri *Vedavyasa*.

After shri Madhva, came Shri Padmanaba, Narahari,

Madhava and Akshobhya Teertha one after another and worshipped Mula Rama, Dig-Vijaya Rama along with the idol of Sita and Vyasa Musti, for nearly forty-eight years and conducted propagation of Dwaita Vedanta successfully occupying that high and holy seat of Vedanta Samrajya.

Jayateertha, a most luminous star in this line of succession, came after Akshobhya Teertha who was one of the direct disciples of Sri Madhva as stated. He is well known by the name of Teekacharya. He has written very elucidating commentaries on all the works of Madhva which well illustrate his learning and clear grasp of the subject. He belonged to a noble family in Maharashtra and he himself was a *Rahut* in cavalry. He was married very early as was the custom in those days. By chance he came in contact with Shri Akshobhya Teertha. Realised the hollowness of human life and taking holy orders assuming the name of Jaya Teertha, renounced the world and worldly pleasures. His parents and relatives though resented this hasty act of Jayateertha in the first instance, later knowing his greatness, reconciled themselves to his views.

Works of Shri Jayatirtha clearly reveal his intelligence and learning. It is said that Shri Vidyaranya of the opposite came going through his scholarly interpretations and elucidations of Sri Madhva, admired his genius so much that he took Jayateertha in procession on the back of an elephant. A great impetus given to the spread of Madhva Siddhanta by his personality, penances, and spirited commentaries. he was the pontifical head for nearly twenty-three years. After Teekacharya came Vidyadhiraja, Kaveendra, Vegeesha, Ramachndra Teertha, Jitamitra, Raghunandana and Surendra Teertha. These came one after another and were the heads of the Mutt of Sri Madhvacharya which is now called as

Shri Raghavendra Swami Muti. Nanjangud, for nearly 187 years.

Sri Surendra Teertha, the last mentioned pontiff, was the contemporary of Shri Krishnadevaraya, the illustrious king of the Vijayanagar kingdom established by Sri Vidyaranya. The king gave an endowment of a big estate to the Swamiji Sri Vyasaraaya Teertha, the head of one of the Maths established by Shri Madhva, who had also the unique honour of being guru to the king at that time, also honoured Sri Surendra Teertha and handed over to him his disciple, a Sanyasi by name Vishnu Teertha, a great learned man. Sri Surendra Teertha who again initiated him , Vishnuteertha, into sacred Mantra along with other rites, took him into the secrets of Vedanta and initiated him to Sanyasa under the name of Vijayindra Teertha. In due course, on the death of Surendra, Sri Vijayeendra succeeded him to the pointifical seat of the Math. His erudite scholarship was deep. He wrote 104 works. He had the capacity and audacity to defeat in Vedic disputes, pandit of the fame of Sri Appayya Deexit. His mortal remains are at Kumbhakonam. During his long and popular pontifical rule, Madhva Siddhanta spread far and wide; and the Math earned dignity and fame as a math of learning (विद्यामठ).

Sri Vijayeendra was succeeded by Sri Sudheendra Teertha and he was also a learned pandit. He wrote works on literature, Vedanta, Meemamsa and architecture. Like Vijayeendra he also got uncommon and high honours like *Rathnabhisheka* and from a Muslim king he got the title of *Jagadguru*. Thus he was an erudite scholar, a godly man of high piety, Guru to the king, and yet had no attachment to anything and the Math in his time attained great dignity and

influence and therefore it is no wonder that the hero of our present story, Maha Bhashya Venkatacharya (Sri Jagadguru Sri Raghavendra Swami) went to him to study the Vedic lore, ultimately got holy orders from him, succeeded him on his death to the pontifical seat of the Math and earned world wide fame.

The Original birth (Mularupa) of Sri Raghavendra Swami was that of *Shanku Karna Devatha* in the court of Sri Brahma Deva. By the curse of Brahma Deva this Shanku Karna was born as Prahlad who won great blessings from God Narasihma. The same Shanku karna was born in Dwapara yuga as Bahleeka Raja and served Sri Krishna. Again he was born as Vyasaraja in his third birth. This Vyasaraja had the unique honour of being Guru to Six maharajas of Vijayanagar. Vyasaraja was as deep in his learning as he was handsome in form. The three works, Tarka Tandava, Nyayamrita and Chandrika are the three eyes of Madhva Siddhanta. He was the Chancellor of Sanskrit University at Vijayanagar where more than ten thousand students studied. Sri Vallabhacharya also was seeking recognition at his hands. Great ambassadors from foreign countries like Portugal was struck with awe at his personality, intelligence and continence and paid their homage to him. Krishnadevaraya, the most feared, was his humble servant. He had disciples like Vijayendra and Vadiraja. The whole city accorded him homage and tributes. The saint poet, Purandara Dasa, was one of his disciples. Kanaka Dasa followed him.

The poet laureate, Kumar Vyasa of Gadag dedicated his Kannada Mahabharatha to him. It is Vyasaraja who gave him the title of 'Kumara Vyasa'. Vyasaraja is, thus, unique in the history of Madhva Siddhanta looming large with unusual brilliance. Those who are recognised by such great

saints are really blessed. This very saint again took another birth under the name of Sri Raghavendra. This is the final birth of Shanku Karna for upliftment of the people and propagation of Sanathan Dharma.

It may not be out of place to mention here that a history of the great Saints reveal not only the religious life of the then people but also their Social, economic, educational and cultural conditions, just like a history of great rulers and philosophers etc. It may even be stated that such great persons whether rulers or saints or philosophers influence and mould the character of the people of their times. The memory of such great men who have worked for the cultural and religious uplift of the people is even kept green in the minds of the people. This is the reason as to why people even now have not forgotten kings like Sri Rama, Krishna, the Pandavas, Nala, Harishchandra and others and great sages like Vasistha, Viswamitra, Gowtham, Jamadgni, Bharadwaja and others. Even now people get sufficient inspiration from their life histories. People have retained their love and partiality for spiritual life also even in these days because it is not possible to forget the great services of Acharyas like Shri Shankara, Ramanuja and Madhva, in awakening the people. By reading their life history people understand how to behave and get through clouds gathered over them in life. They are the head-lights to guide even in the future. So it is the duty of a State to impress upon its people indelibly the life and teachings of immortal sages, saints, emperors and holy persons, in its own interest. The States that have undertaken the work of 'Cultural Renaissance' and the religious and political leaders should try their utmost to instill the teachings and preachings of great Emperor Saints and Sages and philosophers in the

minds of the people if at all you want India to continue its rich cultural traditions and heritage. people also should on their part devote serious attention and thought over this and co-operate fully.

Now, turning to the subject on hand, among the great souls that devoted themselves to fulfil the spiritual urges of the people by instilling in them belief and faith in the higher values like religion and God, Sri Raghavendra is an extraordinary personality. For, though he disappeared from us bodily before three hundred years, still he wields an influence over the people for more extensively and intensively than any dead person has done in the Sanathana spiritual field. Without any distinction of caste or creed people throng and have been thronging at Mantralaya to serve him and get purified. Raghavendra in his former birth was no other than Prahlada, the son of Hiranyakashipu, a demon who was an incarnation of diabolical power, sceptic attitude and selfishness; he stood against his own father who had gone astray, taught him the principle of religion and for this he was subjected to most cruel sort of torture and harassing but withstood all these sufferings bravely with the grace of God. He pleased Shri Narasimha with such devotion and adherence to truth that on his prayer God Narasimha showed himself in a pillar of the Royal court when his father Hiranyakasipu questioned him if his God was present in that pillar.

For people who, realising the bonds of creation and not trying to escape them, knowing their own smallness and dependence and surrendering to the supreme will of God, aspire to find means to attain freedom or release, there is no other refuge or guide except Sri Raghavendra. He who surrenders to him unreservedly by entrusting all to him will

find in Gururaja sure guide. For , he averts the evils or mitigates them if unavoidable, gets their desires fulfilled all the while making people aware of the littleness of wordly things and their evanescent nature, wins them over to things divine and spiritual and helps them to attain their destination. Saints of this type are rarely found. It is the will of God to protect religion and culture through such saints in this kali Age (कलियुग). Therefore you find Brindavana of Raghavendra spreading over the length and breadth of India so that it is convenient for the devotees to serve him in their own places to realise their ends instead of going over to Mantralaya from such distant places. When such opportunities are afforded, devotees should get themselves freed from all sorts of webs and surrender to him and seek refuge in him for their final release.

It is only through the grace of Bhagawan Narayana that one gets release from bondage. This grace is won through selfless work and sincere love of god and man. Love or Bhakti is defined as attachment to God par excellence firm and enlightened by knowledge of his supremacy and unexcelled greatness. It is only through this love and not by any means that one gets final release. So you must be first convinced that God is the supreme lord and the sole creator of the universe, full of auspicious attributes and many other powers; It is only then that we could redirect our love flowing in natural course towards our kith and kin to God, immensely increased in intensity and firmness. Then only we are eligible for divine grace which surely leads to permanent happiness free from the chains of birth and death.

Devotion and service to one's Guru leads us easily to God as the following Smriti Vachana says "यस्य देवे परा भक्तिः यथा देवे तथा गुरौ" Guru plays an important role in God-Realis-

tion. the etymological meaning of Guru is thus: "गु" is darkness "रु" is the dispeller of that darkness in desciples lighting the lamp of knowledge in him "गु शब्दस्त्वन्यकारस्स्यात् रु शब्दस्तन्निवर्तकः ।" Now Shri Raghavendra is fit to be called "Guru" simple and attributeless because it is he who can dive deep into our nature and of the soul and remove the sacred veil that covers it. So he deserves our homage and loyalty to the extreme degree. Love and homage follow the knowledge of the greatness of the saint and his service to humanity.

A study of the life history of Sri Raghavendra Swami will instil in the minds of devotees more faith in the Guru and paves the way for the speedy realisation of both spiritual and material ends or objects desired by them as they will be able to worship the saint with untiring and constant devotion and please him. It is with this end in view and in the interests of the devotees who are not in a position to read and understand the history of this saint which has so far appeared only in Sanskrit Kannada and Hindi, that this book in the English language is brought out. This book is a mere translation of the relevant extracts from the Guru Charita of Late Vedantarajna H.K.Vedavyasacharya, M.A., Ph.D., who had taken great pains in bringing forth a book on the life and works of Sri Raghavendraswami also among other things in the said book in the Kannada language on the basis of original works in sanskrit, letters and documents, words of poets and sastras. I hope that this life history based on the historical records and written in conformity with the accepted conceptions of the principles of Shastras will find ready acceptance at the hands of devoted readers and help them to get the blessings of Shri Gururaja.

Doddamane,

Nanjangud

7-8-63

Ever at the service of the learned,

RAJA, S. GURURAJACHARYA

PREFACE TO THE SECOND EDITION

It is well known that Shri Parimala Research and Publishing House was established in 1945 by perpetual inspiration and Patronage of Sri Suyameendrathirtha who was the Pontiff of Sri Raghavendraswamy Mutt for collection, Preservation and Publication of many Sanskrit Works of Sri Raghavendraswamy, his Predecessors and followers.

This is one of the several works which is published in memory of Sri Raghavendraswamy Tri-centenary and Silver Jubilee Function of our Institute. This book is specially published for the benefit of English speaking people who aspire for spiritual guidance and solace.

We are grateful for financial help of Sri B.R.Panthulu, the Proprietor of Padmini Pictures, madras and a devotee of Sri Gururajaru in bringing out this publication. Our thanks are also due to Sri H.Venkoba Rao who took the Printing burden in his own press very efficiently.

We Pray God to bless them with all spritual happiness.

'Gopuradarshini'
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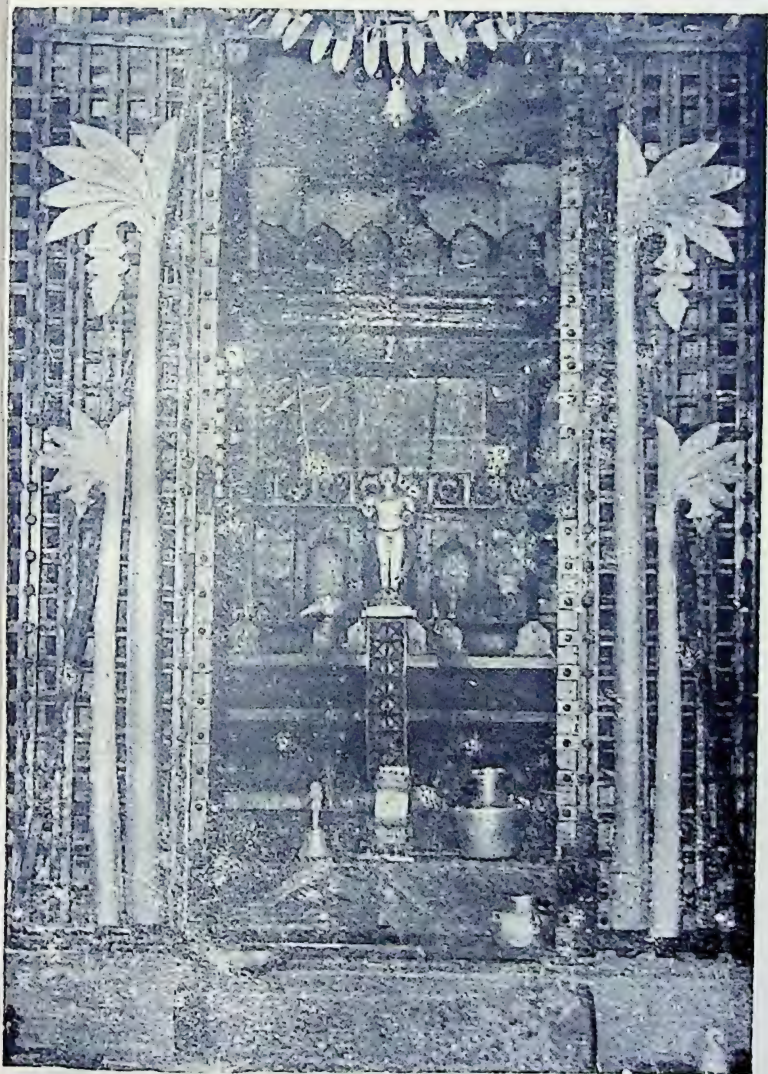
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Sri Sujayeendra Teertha Swamiji



Author
Dr. H. K. Vedavyasacharya



JAGADGURU SRI RAGHAVENDRA SWAMI ENVIRONMENT

World is regulated by a law and tied down by a discipline. All activities are controlled by a definite plan. Nothing takes shape by chance or unrelated to the central control. what appear as miracles can be explained as effects resulting from causes. people living in a distant corner of the country find even the usual important happenings as amazingly unusual. Those who are conversant with political activities can follow even the incidents in other countries. Events in the infinite universe are found as inexplicable wonders by the laymen living in a corner. Thus the history of events that being great souls and geniuses into limelight has been found as a story of uncommon incidents beyond the ken of ordinary people. But of course experts can delve deep into network of causes and effects and bring out the proper environment and the universal will that brought forth such eminent personages.

Today Raghavendraswami is a common topic of talk in every house in the south. How he was ushered into great fame, if properly studied is found to be a very meaningful and interesting history. That is why he was able to realise the great purpose of his life. The pontifical line beginning from Sanaka and others, enriched by Sri Madhva coming in that line with his subtle philosophy was graced by a galaxy of successors like Vibhudendra, Surendra, Vijayeendra and Sudheendra. Likewise the math was honoured and patronised by kings and emperors exhibiting implicit faith in them and enouraging the spread of the mission. Common people were struck with wonder at the rapid progress the math attained;

but they could not understand the significance of the great teachings propounded from time to time by line of saints and Sanyasis. A man who could help the mass to achieve this was badly needed and earnestly awaited. Raghavendraswami entered the scene at this opportune time. He was the man who could successfully lead the masses into spiritual awakening for in his former life he had the experience of doing these wonders. Now also the same history has been repeated. he came to this world having before him this great mission of his life. That which succeeds goes on increasing in meaning and importance over those that preceded is a rule found in the science of interpretations. The same rule holds good in the course of lives of Sri Raghavendra and he attained unusual success in this third Avathar leaving far behind what he had done in the previous Avathar and thus he was able to get the full grace of Hari.

GENEOLOGY OF THE MASTER

In the court of Mayura Varma, a king of Kadamba dynasty, brahmins of sixty families held posts of high rank. When these brahmins lost their support from kings of both kadamba and Chalukya dynasties, they took refuge in Vijayanagar kings. They were all of different 14 Gotras, of these the *Beegamudre* of Goutama Gotra was famous. One of this family named Krishna Bhatta was a genius. Well versed in Vedic lore and quite an adept in the art of music. He played very dexteriously on the *Veena*. He was gifted with that art; and people appreciating uncommon skill, called him *Veena Krishna Bhatta*. His fame spread and reached the court of Vijayanagar. Then Krishnadevaraya was ruling, who invited him and admired the learning and the skill of Krishna Bhatta and became his disciple and became himself an accomplished artist. Thus fortune favoured Krishna Bhatta,

and he was a gem of the Vijayanagar court. His son Kanakachala Bhatta was a chip of old block and Thimman-na Bhatta was the son of Kanakachala Bhatta. While still young he studied the Vedas and got wonderful proficiency in that lore and kept up the fame of the family in the art of music, and played nicely on the Veena. Just by this time the battle of *Rakkasa Tangadi* was fought and Vijayanagar moved still more to the south.

Thimmanna Bhatta left the royal palace and sought refuge in the Guru. then the Pontifical Head was Surendra Teertha and this learned man was a great favourite of this Guru. Thimmanna Bhatta stayed with him under his gracious patronage and was highly honoured. Shri Ranga Raya endowed the swamiji with a great grant of a village Jahagir in the year 1575 A.D. The swamiji most graciously give a part of it as gift to his disciple and Pandit Thimmanna Bhatta. Thimmanna Bhatta had an obedient and loving wife in Gopikamba who remained throughout a dutiful wife. Her only anxiety was that she had no issues for some years and once she said to her husband suppose we go to Tirupathi and worship there the titular deity Sri Venkatesh....! The husband readily consented to the proposal of his wife and both of them with gracious consent of the swamiji retired to Tirupathi and worshipped Venkatesh with unflinching devotion. They returned to their place being suggested to them that they would be soon having their desire fulfilled.

Then the kings of Vajayanagar had settled in Penukon-da. So Bhatta thought as to where to stay? Then life was not so difficult a problem as we find it today. Royal support and patronage was easily available to learned brahmins who, therefore could easily devote themselves to the performance of pious deeds enjoined in by *Varna* and *Ashrama*.

Many such brahmins were found in *Tundeera Mandal* in Tamil Nad. There were many such colonies (Agraharas) of brahmins which were holy. Every house was a seat for Philosophical discussions and sacrificial performances.

By this time Shri Surendra Teertha had passed away and Vijayeendra and Sudheendra had succeeded; and the math had made its saty at Kumbhakonam in Tundeer Mandala. The power of Vijayanager was gradually declining and one of its fudetary Princes, Chevappa Nayak of Tanjore was gradually rising in power till at last he became the chief of Tanjore. He too followed in the wake of his predecessors and desired to be a patron of learning and piety; and gave shelter to such gems as Appayya Dixit, Vijayeendra Teertha and Tatacharya and others in his court.

Considering all these things Timmanna Bhatta retired to Tundeer Mandal with his wife and stayed there. By the blessings of Srinivasa he had now two issues one female and the other male. After going through ceremonies and Samskaras that are enjoined at the time of birth he named them 'Venkatamba' and 'Gururaja' respectively. They were brought up in ease and comfort for about six or seven years. They had now no hope of anymore children being born to them, this caused them anxiety for it is rightly said in the Sastras 'To have one child is as good as to have no children'. What assurance is there that one having an only issue would have all the benefits, earthly and heavenly which a man having sons will have besides, if that only son turns out to be a dullard how will our family maintain the name and fame? On my part I did much to contribute to the family reputation and I held it high. But I must have an extra-ordinary son, a genius. This is not impossible if Shrinivasa who has come down to the world would bless

me. Such a jewel of a son is beyond the reach of thieves and robbers. If he would be a devoted Bhagavat I am assured of good state in the next world. These and similar were the thoughts of the troubled man who immediately talked all these things before his wife. She readily accepted the propos as she was always ready to worship Shrinivasa. Thus Timmanna Bhatta with his wife and children inspired by the noble thought of having an extraordinarily gifted son went to Venkatachala and began to worship Him with devotion and faith. After having much experience of this world the mind had become quite ripe and fit for renunciation of the world and devotion to God. They took to very austere penance which resulted in the purification of the mind.

When a great personage partakes in an undertaking, his will being very near the Supreme will of God, all tend towards its succesful accomplishment. Because there is the will of god at its back. No less a personage than the greatest devotee Prahlad has come down as an emissary of Heaven on a holy mission and it is but natural to expect a congenial environment for its fulfilment. That is why the Bhatta couple desired to worhip Shrinivasa. Just as the parents of Shri Madhva had their bodies and mind purified by devoted services to Ananteshwar so also these two had their bodies purified. Venkatesh was pleased and blessed them with an assurance that they would soon get a reknowned son who would purify the whole world.

BIRTH & CHILDHOOD

Timmana Bhatta and his wife were elated with joy. They accepted the divine grace offered thanks-giving and returned to their village. From conception on an auspicious day to delivery on still more auspicious day the foetus

developed and lent a peculiar lustre to the mother. The desires of this pregnant woman were restricted to very pious longings of a righteous soul. A sort of disgust could be read on her face for all things wordly. Gopikamba now bearing the burden of the world master in her womb showed signs of pleasant exhaustion. One day when planets were in ascendance in their respective abodes she gave birth to a male child.

Timmanna Bhatta having heard the glad news of the birth of a son, with joy knowing no bounds jumped into a water as ordained by the Shastras and had bath. To-day his ancestors found an access to better world and he had the highest satisfaction on this account. All who saw the child were simply amazed and admired the brilliance with which it was gifted. Then continued the holy acts like Jatakarma and others that were performed. The father called the child after due ceremony by the name of 'Venkatanath'. The child that would be the master to the whole world well deserved this name. Being born through the blessings of Shri Venkatesa he was called so to express the highest sense of gratitude; as well it suggested that the highest favours were to be showered on the child by the Almighty.

This child born with a handsome body began to crawl and toddle as time passed on the Juvenile activities of the child were very enticing especially when it licked the thumb and played. Though these were childish plays yet they were highly significant to those who were gifted with insight. The child endowed with heavenly lustre, though indulging in meaningless actions of a young toddler seemed to be a mystic of deep vision to those experienced in that spiritual art. In the sixth month the child was given food for the first time with due ceremony.

In the third year there were the tonsure ceremony and initiation into reading and writing of the Alphabet. Having no royal patronage, Timmanna Bhatta being extremely poor heard the daughter attained puberty; so the question of marriage hung heavily upon his mind causing unbearable anxiety. But all these cares and worries were completely forgotten at the sight of beautiful child. The child did not lead him to infatuating fondness but to a wakeful sense of his own spiritual uplift as the birth of such a holy child assured him of purification and realisation.

He began the study of alphabet by writing "Aum" on sand and asking the precocious child to read it after him.

Immediately the child inquisitively asked him how an all-pervasive God was connoted by such a small letter as Aum. Timmanna Bhat was astounded and found himself at his wits end. His fondness for him as his son melted like dew before the sun; and he found the child a high soul in disguise. he recollected that he was told in his dream that a great devotee of God would be born to him. He was overcome with joy and a feeling of awe and reverence arose in his mind. A shudder ran through out the body with hair standing on end.

He felt that he should bow down before the tiny child. But he was reminded with great apprehension of the life history of Sri Madhwa and the experience of Madhyageha Bhatta his father. He wondered why such a thought came to him. Even if the son were to be a really wise man, the child was his and none had a claim over him. He should be for the present at least his coveted property he thought. He was surprised at the precocity of the child and drew the child near him and clasping him in his close embrace smelt

his head very affectionately. People there hearing the story were equally surprised. They talked among themselves that he was a great devotee of God like 'Prahlaḍ'. Thus the lessons continued.

Timmanna Bhatt was lucky man. That is why he had not many worries in domestic life. He had a devoted wife and loving children and had a highly educated and cultured son-in-law in Lakshminarasimhacharya, a learned man of 'Kashyapa Gotra'. Thus he was assured of happiness both in this world and in the next, his daughter had been married in her eighth year only. Gururaja's study had continued with rapid progress. His thread ceremony was performed. He was now carefree and he thought that his life in future had a safe sailing.

By this time in the math Shri Vijayindra Teertha had expired, Shri Sudhindra Teertha had succeeded him. Timmanna Bhatta was again invited to stay in the mutt as he had done at the time of Shri Surendra. Timmanna Bhatta readily accepted the invitation and went to Kumbhakonam with his family. He had great reception and encouragement in the math known as Vidya Math. Shri Sudheendra was highly pleased with the child Venkanna for his devotion, cleverness and for the gift of his gab. He said to himself that he would be surely a great man, a genius and congratulated the Pandit for having such a gifted son. Timmanna bhatt receiving many gifts and blessing from the Swamiji returned to his village.

In old age Timmanna Bhatta was very much troubled by poverty. But he bore it courageously. His only desire was to see the education of his children completed and he persued it. But he was not lucky enough to see his son an

accomplished and highly cultured learned man. Illness was acute and he in the end expired repeating the name of Narayan.

His funeral obsequies were duly performed under the supervision of the son-in-law Lakshminarasimhacharya. He accepted the responsibility of the education of gururaja himself and Gururaja was married too.

MARRIAGE AND EDUCATION

Venkanna by this time had finished the study of Amara Kosha, Declension of nouns and conjugation of roots and poetry. His behaviour was very strange since he came from the Math. He daily gave himself up to the constant meditation of God. He too wished to perform the worship of God with all the paraphernalia as the Swami did in the Math. He was passionately devoted to *Mula Rama* kept in the mantap and worshipped by the swami. He was already introduced to the wonderful deeds done by God in many of his *Avataras* and thus came to know the story of Mula Rama and believed in the uncommon efficacy of the idol.

The elder brother Gururaja performed the Upanayana ceremony of his younger brother Venkanna. Then he followed his elder brother and went to his brother-in-law Lakshminarasimhacharya for further study. Shri Krishna sat at the feet of Sandcepin for study and in the like manner Venkanna approached his brother-in-law. Venkanna liked to play with his playmates and was always sure to win. Hold breath-and-touch (kabadi) was a game very popular in those days and he showed great skill in that game. Even elders admired his extra-ordinary control over his breath. Going

through literature including Drama, he began the study of logic, Grammar and Philosophy. In reciting *Vedas* he had great proficiency. At last he also attained high proficiency in the art of music, sacred to the *Gandharvas*.

After adolescence he stepped into youth and had now a charming personality. He had the resplendent glow of the spirit fully reflected on his face. The more he grew learned the more modest and humble he became. Solemnity settled in his face. His broad chest clearly indicated the manly quality of indomitable courage. Venkanna was very handsome and his stature and proportion was ideal. His face was an index to his learning and attainments. His grave appearance raised high hopes of ideal development and growth.

It was now the duty of the elder brother Gururaja to take the responsibility of his younger brother's marriage when he attained the age fit for marriage. He selected the bride from the learned family near by and had the marriage with pride and pomp befitting the occasion.

MARRIED LIFE AND POVERTY

For some time Venkannacharya was happy living in his village with his wife. But soon he found himself in financial stringency. His father himself had suffered a lot in the latter part of his life, losing royal patronage. After his death, brother Gururajacharya somehow made both ends meet with the help of his brother-in-law Laxmi Narasimhacharya. Venkanna Bhatt after his marriage had two fold anxiety. For not only he must pull on, but he must also maintain the dependent on him by marriage. As he had satisfactorily gone through the Vedic lore under the guidance of Laxminarasimhacharya it must not have been very difficult for him to teach some students and eke out his living by approaching

some rich men. But he being a man of self-respect and one of spiritual inclination did not like to lead such a common and mean life living on the bounties of others. He had a ambition of becoming an extra ordinarily learned man quite well versed in the sacred lore; and was very eager to popularise the tenets of Shri Madhva, so nicely expostulated by Shri Jayateertha, thinking this to be the highest service of God. Besides this he was very keenly inclined to meditate constantly on the supreme Lord of the three worlds, in his heart. But all this ambition was mercilessly nipped by the killing cares and worries of a life of poverty. He was deeply engrossed in this thought and he thought he entered a blind alley as he could not find a way out of it. Thus days and months rolled on. He thought of going to Laxminarsimhacharya for higher studies; but he found his wife would be a heavy burden and therefore left that idea.

Saraswati Bai was the beloved wife of Venkanna Bhatt. She was highly devoted to him and knew his-likes and dislikes instinctively. She thanked God for having been able to marry such a pious man and felt herself pleased with a sense of satisfaction. She was all eyes to see the needs of her husband and cater to them. Saraswati being keenly alive to the poor condition of the family realised that her husband had a secret motive for his reconciliation with his wretched state. Both of them were highly sensitive and one would intelligently realise other's dejection and the sunny humour and the intelligent wit would laugh it out in no time.

Venkanna Bhat was acutely suffering from the most painful poverty Saraswati soon conceived and after nine months gave birth to a child. Due ceremonies being over called his son by the name of Lakshminarayana.

As the family grew in number poverty was keener; A man given up to constant meditation is scarcely endowed with riches. for God declares that he would rob a man whom he wishes to favour and Venkata Bhatta was a fitting illustration. It is not easy to give an idea of his suffering and hardships mainly due to utter scarcity and appalling poverty. The proverbial poverty of Kuchela of *Dwapara* was repeated in the poverty of Venkata Bhatta of *Kaliyaga*.

Saraswati did not know why the day broke. Devoted to her husband she had not stepped outside her house. She had only one old saree in which she was clad. It was tattered and torn. As for her son Lakshminarayana, he was stark naked and her husband had no more than a small piece of cloth marked out by innumerable holes. His wife got a piece of coarse cloth once a year.

There was not in store sufficient provision even for one day. Rice was rarely found with curry. They had no oil even once in a year for their bath even on suchdays as *Dipavali*. Then what wonder is there that they were served with ghee long ago in their marriage. A leaf to serve the food on was not available; hence food was served for some days on the floor.

In spite of all these there was no grumbling and no growling. Hardship made Saraswati Bai more humble and suffering made Venkata Bhatta more devoted to God.

One day Venkata Bhat finished his bath and worship and just had a peep in the kitchen in which there seemed to be no lighting of the fire. She was found sitting in a corner highly dejected.

Venkata Bhatta:- Why! What are you thinking

Saraswati Bai:- Fate forbids me to prepare something to offer to god.

Venkata Bhatta:- This need not cause you anxiety. Even a leaf, flower, fruit, water, if offered with love to God is thought great . But love is lacking in us; therefore we must think.

Saraswati Bai:- "But what to offer in the sacred fire?"

Venkata Bhatta:- "a mental offering is as efficacious as material"

Saraswati Bai could no longer bear. She burst into tears as is natural with women. But she hid it and pressed her lips tight having her head down and with much self-restraint she said 'Even discourses on Vedanta require food as pre-requisite'.

Venkata Bhatta knew the cause of her grief. He found how powerful was the physical bondage, Worship of God is impeded by difficulties at every step. Food nourishing this body is gaining undue importance. These and many more thoughts lashed him into righteous fury and he fell into a meditative thinking and came out of it with much relief and freshness; and replied the question in a very jovial mood.

Venkatabhata:-Why, meditation is a good food. I know why you are so miserable. You are more concerned with the child Laxminarayana than either of us who are starving. This is natural. But shall I beg at the door of others for a morsel of rice? God is great and generous, bountiful and beneficent. His favour alone saves us. We cannot and should not beg one who is dependent, Thus teach the Vedas. Ours is to think and meditate on him; and to do the deeds assigned to us. What Hari gives is great and that is

ours, so teaches the world teacher Sri Madhva. There is nothing sinful if we beg God for the worldly joys. He is sure to accede to our prayers. Kuchela took resort to God and offered him fried rice to enable him to keep the wolf from the door.. For power, Dhruva worshipped Him and did austere penance. When his life was in danger Gajendra cried to Him piteously. All these three were favoured their prayers being granted for worldly welfare. As for Kuchela, he was embraced by Lord Sri Krishna. Rukmini spared no efforts to make his stay happy. Kuchela never thought of his pinching poverty which was cutting him deep into his marrows and returned home saying:- 'Really how gracious the Lord was to condescend to talk freely and with such attachment with a sinful man like me. To favour me he declined to give me wealth. How kind of him, Thus thinking he came to the house and found that he was given fabulous wealth. Deva Sharma has prayed to Shrinivasa praising Him that he would shower the most chosen gifts upon those who remembered him either through ignorance or innocence, under pretext or pretention, or pressed by poverty or starvation.

Even when all these stand by as testimony and evidence we refuse to remember him with gratitude even for a moment. He who bears the burden of nourishing us all mentally and physically is not remembered, how ungrateful we prove ourselves to be! How wrong it is to blame him for our calamities which befall us as the result of our previous deeds. Really we are sinners. In what way we are different from beasts when we do not bring to mind the rich and auspicious qualities contained in him? How Bramha has humiliated himself while praising God? and such humiliation is becoming only the mean souls we ourselves are. The high souled Vijayindra humbly confesses before God that humanbeings through arrogance forget him and

praise themselves through vanity. thus as he was saying he fell into raptures and loudly cried with humble submission - "I cannot find among the fallen, fallen lower than myself you are the only succour whom I can depend upon. Redeemer of the sinful and fallen thou art! Oh! Lord of the World, Sri Krishna! true to your title. Seeing her husband completely fallen in a trance Saraswati Bai found her hair standing on end. She blamed herself for having complained for bread before such Yogies given to spiritual joys. She fell prostrate at the feet of her husband and begged to be pardoned for exceeding the limits in her talk. Such days were the days of general starvation for all. For many days in a year in his house kitchen fire was not lighted. Though the eleventh day of fasting was only once in a fortnight in the calender, it came many a time in his house.

Fate pursued Venkata Bhatta closely and to test his strength and character more and more difficulties beset his path. One day at day break Saraswati Bai rose from her bed as usual and attended to her routine but she was surprised by the disappearance of some broken pots and torn clothes. Slowly pushing aside the door the thieves had entered into the house in the mid night and had bolted with the few broken pots and torn clothes. Quite dismayed at this the poor wife came and stood silent at the feet of her husband. He got up from his bed uttering the names of Hari. She silently bowed and stood dejected.

Venkata Bhatta did not know the theft at his house. He thought the wife was standing there with the daily complaints of scarcity in his house. So he began.

Venkata Bhatta - When you have come to share the life of a poor man how can you be happy?

Saraswati Bai fearing to break the news of the theft at his house at once began to answer the question of her husband Saraswati Bai - I think this is the happiness part of my life.

Venkata Bhatta - How can you be happy when you are reduced to the most abject sort of poverty and thrown into cutting scarcity.

Saraswati Bai -This poverty is nothing!! How lucky I am!! Is any one blessed like me? I fear if only I would come up to your level of sacrifice and devotion.

Venkata Bhatta - This is the straight forwardness very natural with women.

Saraswati Bai - What is this? Everyday reveals to me a new good thing in you. How can a little woman measure the height and fathom the depth of a noble soul like you.

Venkata Bhatta - Let that go for the present.

Saraswati Bai - I feel constrained even to expose my feelings I betray my littleness when I claim my husband, my master, as my exclusive property; for my husband is abode of vast and deep knowledge; unparalleled devotion; and the real dedication to religion and God. I gave vent to my feelings only under the indulgent thought that I am yours. Please forgive me. I do not like to pull your legs down to clay when your head is high in the sky. But my mind is to blame!!

Venkata Bhatta What of my knowledge!! It is only the merciful grace of that gracious Lord. You find devotees who have hitched their waggon to the spirit; yet how humble and meek how absorbed head over ears in the meditation of

the supreme!! But look to me!! I am spending my time idly. There is a great thirst in me to know more of Shastras and more of the greatness of the Lord. But I do not know the path way to these.

Saraswati - ofcourse I am incompetent to advise so eminent a person as you!! But if I place before you what I know I think it would not be out of place.

Venkata Bhat - I do welcome any suggestion You need not feel any constraint.

Saraswati Bai - The swamiji's camp is quite near. In such a place.....

Venkata Bhat - What an apt suggestion it is. Really you are very correct in your discretion. That is why I think there is harmony and good understanding between us.

Saraswati Bai - (To herself) Really I am blessed. I was so richly complimented by my husband. How kind and merciful is God who gave me such a rich treasure as this! [to others] it seems my master is inclined to put me to an acid test. When I got up in the morning I found the house empty; for all the things were robbed by the thieves.

Venkata Bhat - This is really surprising [keeps silent for a moment] Ah!! it is right. Ah it is alright!! The sweet will of God is like that. When we are under his protection we need not fear anything. Let everything go but his blessings.

Saraswati Bai:- This body which is the gifted tenement of an illustrious light is subjected to starvation - What should be done?

For the last three days they both had no meals. To

add fuel to fire there was theft. After a moment though something flashed on his mind and he said with a light smile playing on his lips.

Venkata Bhat: - "Why think now ! You have suggested a beautiful idea! Why I donot know. God has prompted you to speak like that. But what of you?

Saraswati Bai:- Why think that? How can I remain away from you? To live without enjoying your inspiring discourse on shastras! Unthinkable even in dream! Please take me along with you.

LEARNING

Accepting the happy suggestion of his wife he went with family to Kumbhakonam and sought shelter of Shri Sudheendra. Teertha Swami. He was very happy to see the Swamiji who condescendingly enquired about his well-being. Venkata Bhatta placed before the Swamiji in privacy his innermost desire. Swamiji was very much delighted to hear that and he made arrangements for his stay at the Math with his family. Venkata Bhatta was looked after with care and respect.

The Swamiji very much appreciated the eagerness of his mind and sincerity of purpose and the very next day choosing the most auspicious moment began to teach him. The Swamiji was trained in the tradition of Jayateertha Vibhudendra Teertha and Chandrikacharya under the guidance of Vijayeendra Tirtha; and this man was his teacher. Venkata Bhatta the most versatile genius was the pupil taught. You can just guess the standard of the lessons. Lesson on different branches of the Shastras were given every day. Lessons in Vyakarana Maha Bhashya Jayadeva commentary

Bhatta Meemamsa, Bhamati, Gourava Meemamsa Tatparya chandrika and other works were regularly given. To guess the very method of teaching of those days is sensationally thrilling. Lessons were not bound by limits of time. Yet the intense absorption to be found in teaching is very rare now-a-days even in the researches. Teaching of those days tended towards the development of the personality and carried the torch of knowledge to the next generation. Today it is the deceitful mask for vanity ignorance greed and selfishness.

After the daily worship in the morning and evening Venkatacharya gave discourses to his students. Different groups of students approached him at different times and were given lessons in different branches of knowledge. Thus not only he was studying himself; but also teaching his student. It was simply admirable to see how he was very busy in pious occupations. He highly enjoyed giving lessons.

In the morning Venkata Bhatta dealt with Sutra Bhashya and others treated subjects in Vedanta. Then lessons in grammar were given. Then came the turn of logic. Afternoon was reserved for the treatment of Meemama lessons. Thus days were passed at Kumbhakonam.

INTERPRETATIONAL DISCUSSION:

The Swamiji had his usual religious circuit and Venkatacharya followed the Math, the Swamiji had his course in the surrounding places which was called the Chola country. This fact was rendered holy bathed by the river Kaveri. Climate was salubrious. Cool Breeze spread the fragrance of flowers on all sides. The fertile lands were richly covered with green crops.

The country was full of agraharas or colonies of holy

Brahmins devoted to vedic studies. In spite of invasions of foreigners which had led to anarchy resulting in mental depression and a religious low ebb, the ancient culture of the Chola country had still a firm hold on the mind of the people. This was the characteristic of the country. Every agrahar had about thousand Brahmin families, and every house was an abode of Pundits. And for this, as in present days they had not to maintain highly expensive universities. It is highly doubtful whether such universities impart real knowledge. Art, Science, Religion, Culture were not imparted by the compulsion of higher authorities. Compulsory education and spread of literacy cause mere waste of money. Men's mind should be converted to think that they are born men and so they should not be beasts but men devoted to acquire knowledge; and the acquired knowledge should be imparted to their younger generation. This first lesson should be learnt by us. Otherwise mere force from outside does not encourage spread of education. And the ancient method was the method of instruction. But enough of digression. So every house was a centre of education with an efficient instructor. Mere knowledge does not take us long, but it must be accompanied with character and good conduct. Therefore only, in every house fire worship and similar holy duties were meticulously attended to. It is aptly described that the sky in that country had become dark with sacrificial smoke.

So people there accorded a hearty welcome to the Swamiji when he took up his journey through out this country. In the course of peripatetic wandering he reached Rajamannargudi. There he came across an Advait Sanyasi with his disciples. When two pandits meet, it is but natural that they should engage themselves in discussion on religious topics. They never indulge in indecent talk on wordly af-

fairs. Thus they kept their knowledge well whetted and sharpened like razor's edge fit for ready use in Polemical disputes. When Venkata Bhatta saw the Sanyasi believing in Adwait, he opened the discussions attacking the very line of thought of Sankara's Adwaita wada. This dispute went on in Sanskrit and only those that knew the language and the discipline of Philosophy could follow it with much appreciation.

Venkata Bhatta - What evidence can be adduced to prove the identity of *Jeeva* and *Brahma*?

Sanyasi-As everything other than *Brahma* is illusory and false, *Jeeva* and *Brahma* are one. 'Venkata Bhatta - This does not amount to adducing evidence in respect of identity.

Sanyasi-You cannot use properly. You have used a word (*Kinchatah*) which is nowhere used. Its usage is not found anywhere either in literature or Grammar. I think this is your own coining.

Venkata Bhatta - Then you admit that you are not acquainted with Mahabhashya

The repartee of the opponent invited the whole group. One of the disciples of the Sanyasi much enraged said Keep quiet venkata bhatta Mahabhashya is too big a mouthful for you? How conceited you are! How that word is derived and how that is used is the question you do not reply the question and vaunt like this!!!

Now Venkata Bhatta began to reply by reciting Mahabhashya

Another disciple [much enraged] Oh! You Pundit who has Mahabhashya ready on the lip!! What is the form of the

root [*Psa*]in hahant if you have Luganta?

Before he had finished the question Venkata Bhatta gave a ready answer. It is (*Papsat*) In return he asked its form in *Yajanta* The questioner never expected this question. He had not sufficient acquaintance with grammar to know if that was a correct form. The question again was an eye sore to him. So he sat quiet with his face hung down in shame. His teacher the Sanyasi also thought for an hour, but could find no answer to it. All became quiet in the assembly.

The swamiji who was watching all this was simply amazed at the high level of his ineligence and attainments. He knew Venkata Bhatta to be a good student having great powers of comprehension. But his skill in conducting dilectical discussions. His deep study of the Shasras, his way of talking enlightened with a smile took Swamiji by surprise. More than anything else, he did not know that he was so well acquainted with Mahabhashya which he was studying with him. So the swamiji approved of his depth of study openly in the assembly and said to Venkatabhata; Oh!! Venkatacharya! We sincerely appreciate your learned discussions and uncommon proficiency in grammar. Our great Acharya who is an adept in crossing these ocean of Maha Vyakarna has blessed you. I think that I should call you Mahabhashyacharya. Venkatanatha: "I accept it as a blessing at the hands of the Swamiji!" hence he was known as Mahabhasya Venkata Bhatta.

His fame spread far and wide. The Swamiji thought that he was an asset to the Math. The Swamiji worshipping Shri Krishna returned to Kumbhakonam. This was really a great victory. The Math was known as Vidya Math of great

victory [Math devoted to knowledge]. And now the best Pandit Venkata Bhatta was the court pandit. Then how splendid it was? An invitation was sent from the court of Tanjore Naik. so the Swamiji went there with his paraphernalia. there in the court of the Tanjore the honoured pandit was Yagjna Narayana Dixit He was a Pandit of great reputation and strict follower of vedic injunctions He had written a learned commentary on the Sulba Sutras. The Dixit paid a courtsey call on the Swamiji and after an initial and mutual questioning of thier well doing Dixit turned to Venkata Bhatta and said....Oh! your name and fame are spread wide and I really feel happy to have seen you, though by chance. [He used the word *Kaka taleeya* for By chance]

Venkata Bhatta just requested Dixit to explain the word '*Kaktaleeya*' This became the topic of discussion. Venkata Bhatta beat the dixit hollow in the various explanation he put forth proving their inadequacy or incorrectness by the rules of grammer. He showed the unsatisfactory nature of the definitions offered by the exegesis of former writers so that the learned pandits and poets that had gathered there were nonplussed.

The assembly met again in the afternoon. The topic of discussion was the burning topic of the day 'receiving marks on the body with heated Mudras or signs of vishnu'. Dixit argued that to burn our body with heated marks of vishnu was against the injunctions of veda and futile. Venkata Bhatta rebutted all these arguments and said that to achieve a good end this burning mark was essential and that is the distinguishing mark proving the eligibility of a candidate for Release or Mukti and reproduced many evidence from

'*Chakra Meemamsa*' written by Sri Vijayeendra Swami. the Dixit really acknowledged the vast erudition and scholarship of Venkata Bhatta. He was glad to find his learning was very deep and honoured him with special gifts.

WORKS WRITTEN

Thus Venkata Bhatta achieved remarkable success in polemic disputes and was known as the most terrible disputant. Now he had some satisfaction in life; he felt the purpose being fulfilled. Living in the Math itself he had a responsibility of the maintenance of the family. Besides this, daily there was a discourse on the topics of Vedanta. His ultimate aim was to spread the chief tenets of the philosophy of Madhva among the seekers of Truth and this was realised to some extent by discussions of this type, But still this was not sufficient to bring the cardinal principles home to the eligible aspirants by removing haunting doubts. This requires work of a permanent type. He resolved that writing books is the only course to fulfill this. As an auspicious benediction to his huge work he wrote a commentary to Narayana Panditacharya's small work '*Anu Madhva Vijaya*' or "*Prameya Nava Malika*". Every canto of Madhva Vijaya is summarised into a couplet in Anu Madhva Vijaya. Venkata Bhatta elucidates beautifully how the whole meaning of the Madhva Vijaya is stuffed into that couplet.

His maiden attempt was devoted to elucidate a narrative poem depicting the pure and noble life of Shri Madhva: and this brought him extraordinary fame in the world of writers in Sanskrit. This is the only work he wrote before he took holy orders. All his works belong to his post Sanyasa period. Shri Vadeendra Teerth in his *Guruguna Stavan* says

'Acharya being pleased with his learned commentary on his life history of conquest, had him enthroned in his line of Pontifical heads; and even the deity of speech [वाग्देवी] being pleased with his way of eulogising her lord coronated him in the kingdom of knowledge." So it is clear that this is the only work that belongs to pre-sanyasa period. Therefore the contention that Sri Raghavendra wrote Parimala in his pre-Sanyasa days is a baseless story.

CALL-TO-RENUNCIATION

The commentary on Anu Madhva Vijaya was just an introduction to the huge work he wrote throughout his life. His life ambition was to write a commentary on all the three Vedas following Acharya's *Rig Bhashya*. But the circumstances did not favour the fulfillment and realisation of his life ambition. His teacher Shri Sudheendra Swami was in the know of the things. Somehow he was silent over the matter, *Let God's will be done*" thus saying Venkata Bhatta kept quiet.

Venkata Bhatta was the apple of Shri Sudheendra Swamy's eye. He was thought quite worthy to succeed the Swamiji who was waiting for an opportunity to open the topic before him. Just by this time a disciple of Swamiji being disgusted with worldly life after suffering various sorts of hardships and miseries and seeking renunciation as the only resort, approached the Swamiji with a request to give him holy orders. The swamiji complied with his request and initiated him with due ceremony and called him "*Yadavendra*". He blessed the new sanyasin with an idol of the Math for his daily worship. Yadavendra was pleased with this and started on his religious tours. Shri Sudheendra

perhaps had no intention of making *Yadavendra* his successor.

Shri Sudheendra Swami was a genius of extra-ordinary abilities, and a soul of high spiritual efficacy. His will was the God's will. One day he dreamt that Shri *Mularama* ordered that Venkatacharya alone was fit to rule this Math. "You will allow him to succeed". One day thinking him to be the only spiritual heir to succeed him to the kingdom of the ancient lore, and to the *Vedanta Samrajya* the Swamiji called him. After the preliminary talks were over on the topics of worldly interest, a sufficient introduction, swamiji acquainted Venkatacharya with his intentions.

The Swamiji:- Oh! Venkatacharya! It seems that God is fully pleased with you. A genius like you deserves the post of the head of the Math, otherwise you would not have an opportunity to get success over your opponents. Shri Hari seems to have been highly pleased with your commentary on *Anu Madhva Vijaya*.

Venkatacharya:- I think all this is the gracious favour of your feet. I am now counted as your Holiness gave me resort and lifted me up.

Swamiji:- But we are not pleased with your present condition. We hope to open up still further avenues of life for you.

Venkatacharya:- The favours Swamiji showers upon me demand the highest gratitude from me.

Swamiji:- When *Mula Rama* personally blesses you, what of us?

Venkatacharya:- [Much astonished] Your words smack of something strange.

Swamiji:- There is nothing strange in it. We have been actually directed like that.

Venkatacharya:- Kindly Sir, be good enough to excuse my bold intrusion in your personal secrecy. But may I know what you are thinking now. Considering the galaxy of persons like Jaya Teertha, Vibhuthendra Teertha, Vijayeendra and your goodself succeeding to the Peetha of Acharya I am a poor pigmy. How am I eligible to the Peetha of the empire of Vedanta [वेदान्तसाम्राज्य] adorned by *Sanaka* and others. I cannot even imagine how I shall come to be eligible for such a high post. If a man claims to cross the ocean never knowing it taking a load on his head nobody thinks him to be a same man. Because it is such a ridiculous idea.

Swamiji:- There are many boats like 'Peace' "Self-Restraint" "*Courage*" "*Generosity*" to ferry us across the ocean. But to all these our blessings are the sails which move the boats with great force and speed. Now why tarry on the shore? What fear is there to cross the ocean?

Now Swamiji thought it was a very hard nut to crack for Venkatacharya. So he took him inside and advised and explained to him having closetted with him for a long time. Venkatacharya disclosed his heart before him. Swamiji knew that Venkatacharya and his wife loved each other so intensely. Therefore he had introduced the topic in an unexpected and strange manner taking Venkatacharya by surprise.

Venkatacharya prostrated himself before Swamiji and presented the facts with all humility before him requesting

him to lend a patient hearing. He expressed his inability for a more detailed submission. For renunciation detachment is essential. As long as the wordly fetters tie us fast detachment is only a dream. So Venkatacharya pleaded that his wife was still young. His son had not got his Upanayana performed. His shoulders were still young and incapable of bearing the heavy yoke of the responsibilities of the administration of that great Math. So he was not in the least inclined to take holy orders and be a sanyasi. But he was ever ready to bend before the imperative commands of His Holiness.

His Holiness had well understood the eligibility of Venkatacharya for that high post. But it was natural to be fondly attached to a wife devoted and lovingly responsive. So the Swamiji thought of directly appealing to Venkatacharya, showing clearly how hollow evanescent life is. His words were soft and touching and were spoken with much affection and sincerity. He continued:- "Venkatacharya! You are a great learned man, knowing the secrets of Shri Madhwa Philosophy. Detachment and renunciation are not new subjects to you. Still we are your spiritual well-wishers. This makes us talk to you. Just listen; Every one desires happiness for him-self, wife and children and his relatives, house, math, rank and respect make him happy. That is why every one tries to get them. There is nothing wrong about that. But if you are engaged in getting the means of happiness through out life, when are you going to be happy? This observation holds good in the case of State and it does in the case of individual life. One order gets old and useless; new order is ushered in. But it takes hundreds of years for the new order to take full form. This also gets old changes giving place to new. Enough of thinking of

thing on State and National level. Let us limit ourselves to individual life only. Our ambition is not limited to wife and children, household and sundry affairs, name and fame. It stretches to the skirt of the unknown and the unseen and the mysterious. Music and the fine arts lead man into uncommon experience opening the gate upon ecstatic delight. The poetic delight is happiness itself as the uncommon experience. Wordly delights reveal clues to the existence of another world beyond the reach of the fine senses. Man caught in misery cries pitiously to some power beyond for help. Thus in joy and grief man comes in touch with that unseen power, that Para Bramha. Different seers have shown different ways leading to Him. But considerate and keen critics of thing spiritual will really appreciate the line chalked out by Shri Madhva which he finds more helpful than the others. He has well considered the problem of valuation showing clearly what is the most valuable thing in life. Standing in the midst of wordly life he has shown how to realise the truth that is beyond life and death. That is the path of realisation and others lead away from it. Now if you remain in the wordly life as a householder you will have to hitch your wagon to some wordly star. You shall have to flatter the unworthy and impious. Untruth you shall have to declare as truth, illiberality as liberality. Ugliness as beauty and ignorance as knowledge calling these as worldly success

What all this for? Only to get few coppers from him. Mark!! how avarice leads us astray!! What a humiliation it is! Money thus got, creates desire for more.

So is the life of pleasure. Sexual pleasure are fascinating for the moment. but resulting in abject misery. *Vali* and *Dharma* stand as good illustrations. So these means of

pleasure though yielding miseries. So pious people, like you should not be attached to these things. Seek a path to real happiness; search for its means. That is the path of beauty. The royal road to happiness is shown by the Vedas which are highly fascinating to you. You had once opened before us the topic of writing elucidations to the meaning of the Vedas. This is a work not fit to be undertaken by a householder for it demands concentrated attention of an ascetic. Considering all these things, get yourselves released from the entanglement of attachment-bonds. Perform upanayanam ceremony of your son and thus clear the path to sanyasa.

These words of the swamiji raised a storm in his mind. He was caught in the whirlwind and was tossed between many pairs of alternatives. He thought to himself:-

“Should one be a recluse to realise one self? Cannot a householder attain salvation living and honest life of a householder? There is nothing impossible in this! Besides I have very amiable and loving wife, but what are the means of maintenance? Oh! that most humiliating dependence on others? If not what is the alternative? God is great and merciful!! He had extended his protection even when I was hard pressed by scarcity and poverty. Why should I seek parasite dependence now? Then what is the course that is open to me? To become an ascetic? No! No!! What of my wife Saraswati? where should she go? She entirely depends on me! What about my pretty little son Lakshminarayana? Who else is there to look after them? Why should I bother myself with these worries and anxieties when there is Shri Hari to whom I have completely surrendered? But do I get ample scope to realise my ambition in a house holder's life? In this Kali age scepticism rules at large questioning

even the existence of God! Worse days are expected ahead. The purpose of coming into the cycle of birth will be fulfilled only by proving and convincing the existence of God and thus doing some service to *Bhagavan*. There is still the stupendous task of elucidating and interpreting Vedas following the standard canons of interpretations in contravention of wrong interpretations. Then what is a better course open to me? Life of a house-holder? Oh!! No! a seeker and a student, the quit life of Sanyasa is more congenial. Moreover it is a stage in which God Narayana takes special interest. Good company should be assiduously sought severing all contact with worldly life stepped in ignorance, Solitary life dedicated to meditation should be resorted to. Unreserved surrender to Hari is the specific remedy. Yes ... I am at my wits end. To go from here is to invite the dreadful curse and wrath of he Guru upon me. If I remain here Sanyasa stares in my face!I think this is an ordeal preplanned by Hari to test me. Let his wish be done!!" Thus he thought.

This dejection of his mind did not go unnoticed by Saraswati Bai. Some inquisitive soul had passed this gossip to the ear of Saraswati. It was a bolt from the blue to Saraswati, and she fell on the ground quite unconcious. No body was there to give her any medical aid and treatment. Some time after she herself woke up and sat. She was aching with pain in all her limbs; Suffered suffocation. She even forgot the causes of that aching pain.

Gradually all crept over her mind; and she clearly remembered what had happened. She knew that apprehension of separation from her husband had inflicated such a stunning blow upon her resulting in unconsciousness. She couldnot understand why fate had brought her to the brink

of imminent catastrophe. It was she who had encouraged her husband to succeed to the Guru Pectha as it would help him to realise all his dreams. Now it proved daggers to her heart as it threatened to crush all hopes of happiness. That sanyasa-which hides her husband's face from her, for good... what a terrible world was that.... never to enjoy sweet talk with him..... how is this possible - If ever he was late in coming home what an agony it was to her! A shadow of sorrow on his face brought anxiety and pain to her heart. Her face beamed with joy to hear her husband praised for his learning and fame! It was unbearable to think that such a husband should be for ever lost to her! How can she live without him! The kingdom of heaven would come down to this world for her, when she intently pored on his peaceful face. By day she fought shy to look at him. By night when her husband had slept she longingly would gaze on his charming face without being aware of the passing hours. How sweet were his words to her; She could not understand why fate decreed such a calamity for her. "Whom have I offended? whose happy life have I blighted. But suppose I had been so sinful! How could I have got such a husband! Is this the reward for a firm belief that the husband is God himself giving up all desire for a house, ornaments wealth and other things? How feelingly he would talk to me when he comes home! She had all the sweet moments of her life revived and recollected, picture by picture. Their marriage-how she had cast stealthy glances at him; and how her heart was elated with pride and then! The first day in her husband's house! How her fears were allayed by his soothing and assuring words! The birth of Lakshminarayan! Their crushing poverty and his advice to her. Her prayer to bless her with a life with such a husband. She was nonplussed and thrown into a utter confusion. She did not know who

could help her to make her heart light. The face of solitude was terrible to her. She felt she was alone in the forest and tears rolled in her eyes. Being overcome by grief the tears ran in a constant flow like a river in spate. She did not know how long she wept to herself. Any how after much time had elapsed, she was distressed and grieved, exhausted and spent up and sat dejected completely depressed in her spirit. Just by this time Venkatacharya entered the house. She saw his care worn and harrowed face and she could not gather up her courage to talk to him. As usual he did not talk to his wife but went into his study and sat reading.

The struggle in his mind and the inexpressible grief of his wife made the silence terribly unbearable. Mute conversation went on between the two, one's silence being the eloquent answer to the other. Both went to sleep without breaking the silence.

The oscillation of his mind at last merged itself into the big current of his thinking of the fundamental questions. Just reclining on his bed he thought; "What is this? What is the secret of life? Why could I not accept the most beneficent advice of my master who seeks my welfare. Why this infatuating ignorance to me? It is this ignorance that is the fundamental basis of wordly life; If one is not ignorant! attached to one's wife and children, how can there be wordly existence? But this ignorance, this attachment, this material bondage is the warp and woof of territorial existence. Why should it cause grief to us here. Is this always the root cause of misery? Suppose we give it up; Is there any other alternative? Gita unambiguously arrived at the conclusion that though in the world we must not be of it, material things should go to the worship of the immaterial. Standing in the midst of the existence as unaffected as a

stone in the river we must meditate on the mental picture of Him as conceived by us. Is not this what Lord Krishna taught Arjuna. It is but abject meanness on our part of immerse head over ears in the wordly pleasures. To be in the midst of it and not to be affected by it is the best way to self realisation. Do the constant thought of wife alone console us in this life? On the other hand the constant meditation of Shri Hari, who, in our many sojourns was our unfailing companion standing by us in storm and stress disinterestedly, does lead to real happiness. The devotion and love we feel for him has never been futile. This is our life breath, our life-spirit. This is true! undoubtedly true! some old memory was recalled by him; but slowly it was swallowed up by sleep; which again opened into the magic land of dream. In his dream he saw a royal court in which he was arguing against the king himself. Men in the court turned pale with fear at his audacity in exposing the mean behaviour of the King. Boldly he called him to get down from his throne. He said the so called king on the throne was not the real king. The real King was there in heaven above. He does rule, not only the kingdoms, but also the hearts of the people. He is the physician who ministers best medicine for rejuvenation. The king on the throne was burning with indignation. The person on behalf of whom, he was pleading, descended in a terrible form and dethroned the king and killed him. This was not a real dream. It was a sort of memory! The life connection that was severed was restored. The name of Shri Hari was echoing and rechoing in all the limbs of his body. The dream was a self revelation to Venkatacharya, and so he was highly delighted. It was just 4 O'clock in the morning; the early dawn; still the room was filled with light more resplendent than rays of the rising sun. Greatly amazed he got up from his bed and

sat upon it. Just by his pillow a woman radiating divine effulgence was sitting. His eyes were dazzled by her rays. He was struck dumb to see that human figure" Feeling of joy, wonder and fear simultaneously rose in his mind. He could not speak at all. He sat looking with wondering eyes and mouth agape at the divine form of woman. "Who might she be? not a human creature of course. She bears all signs of super human qualities, what a wonderful figure!! Is she a *Yaksha* or a *Kinnari* or a *Nagakannika* or the *Goddess of Speech*? What she might be? Let it be; I am in no way concerned. But what might have brought her to my side?" Thus he sat almost dazed and dumb.

Really the presence was superhuman; the brilliance though more than that of sun's rays yet was cool like that of moon-light. Broad forehead, elongated eyes, black pupils. Aquiline nose, a small mouth, majestic temples, though slender, yet roundbody, complexion yellowish like a lemon, braid of hair hanging down like a cobra, decorated with gorgeous ornaments, vivacity in the eyebrows setting the whole universe at naught, unsteady eyes, a soft smile, more than all these divine lustre. All these went beyond the imagination of a poet. She graciously cast her glance on Venkatacharya who was intently looking at her and condescended to talk to him.

The Goddess addressed him thus; - "Oh! learned Brahmin I am the Goddess of learning Shri Vedavyasa created me for the recreation of the learned. I am very dear to *Anand Teerth*. Others had vitiated the Vedas, the abode of my glory; and *Poorna Pragjna* not merely set them right, but made the celestial cow of *Bramha Sutras* milk his commentary with which he fed me when I was quite young. Then I was bred up with youthful energy at the hands of

Tikacharya. Then I must say that I was very lucky, for *Vyasaraja* the over-lord of lords, was the real sovereign was undisputed stood at the gate of *Vyasaraja* to be blessed with his gracious look. He took me under his benign protection. He, with his works like *Nyayamrita Chandrika* and *Tarka Tandava* provided me with a palatial building for my permanent residence and a theatre (नृत्यस्थानम्) for my dance and other things. When I see you I find a close affinity between you and him. I was in search of a mate and comrade who had attained youth. That my need was also fulfilled. Then *Vijayeendra* what a grand personality! He was sought by me as my mate. The tender creeper *Nyayamrit* was very dear to me; and he had a commentary of *Amoda* on this. How can I forget the help he so generously rendered me? He gave me a gift of thin and nice saree. Its colour is lovely, That is *Kantakoddhar*. Do I need a different necklace from *Nyaya-Mouktikamala*. But I require a box to keep it safe in. He gave me *Tattvamanikyapeti* the box just the thing I needed Just see here; these beautiful ornaments in the shape of books were given to me by writing various works. A stage (रंगस्थानम्) for my performance was built by your master *Shri Sudhindra*. His elucidating commentary on *Bhagavata* gave a heavenly glare to all my ornaments. Still there was nothing to adorn my fore head. An ornament there adds beauty to all the ornaments. The drama "*Subhadra Parinaya*" was a befitting ornament for my fore-head, standing at the division of my hair, which being a no man's land, in between, right from the fore-head to the middle of the head.

"In spite of all this the elixir of life is *Chandrika*" the creeper. If that dries the very pulsation stops. Now I stand at the brink of that crisis. If I survive then the ornaments

serve to add lustre to me. Already my life is at stake. That is why I have approached you. It is always better to seek shelter with one to whom I was wedded. Otherwise I shall be a butt of public ridicule, as I shall be freely charged with adultery and fornication. A woman is safe under the protection of some body; otherwise her life is squalid and impure. So I again seek your shelter. You write a commentary on "*Chandrika*" and save me from infamy. My life is at your disposal. I stay with your teacher for two years more; then I am left an orphan and helpless. You are the only support left to me".

Venkatacharya heard the words of the goddess, with fixed attention, as they came out in sweet and silver voice.

The goddess of learning (सरस्वती) continued:- "My father is Vedavyas and has ordained that I should ever be with him who worships *Mula Ramadev*. Therefore I am always there to be found. You need not be anxious how you should be able to support me. Therefore you agree kindly to take holy orders. Venkatacharya! Don't be afraid to be a sanyasin lest you should lose all. I am always there, the goddess of learning with you the undisputed monarch of the kingdom of Vedanta. Do not waver to accept the robes. If you fight shy, the Vaishnava Sampradaya is threatened with ruin".

"In the former ages men like you were at the helm of this Sampradaya and were blessed with "God-Vision. That continued till it was under crisis at the time of Pragjna Teertha. He showed great courage in protecting it. Then it reached its climax at the time of Annand Teerth, and continued till it reached the present time of your Guru. If you do not hold it up it is sure to fall down. Then mere babbling will take the place of learned discussion. The ancient

books on the Shastras whold be eaten up by moths and rats, Meemamsa also would be found in the same plight. A time may come when some foolish grammarian would make himself bold to elucidate with a dry commentary”.

“Beside all this I am going to divulge you a great secret. There would be none to uphold the cause of the tenets of Hari. वैष्णवतत्त्व is supreme. Advocates of Shaiva, Skanda and Ganapatya and Shakta propound the supremacy of their respective deities and confuse the minds of the people. Let this also go. But now is approaching the age of scepticism. There would come the positivists who admit only perception प्रत्यक्ष to be the means of knowledge. Now who would be able to convince the people that there is some invisible truth beyond the ken of men and it reigns supreme, and to make them inclined to religion and God? It is possible for you alone having great accumulation of merit of holy career. There is no other mission more holy than this, This would be as good as Vishnu Teerth himself coming again to propound the highest principle of Vishnu and you would be doing spade work for him. You would keep up the seed of this Sampradaya to sprout at the time of *Shri Durga*, Vanquishing the evil spirit and establishing Dharma. You would induce the great incarnation of *Maha Kalki*. Therefore this important mission is allotted to you alone being the most beloved of *Shri Madhva*”.

“This is the time when the good people would not get the direct help of the incarnation of God. You alone can be at the back of good people when they are worshipping God. God has graciously decreed that those who seek your help might cross the ocean. How is it you forget all this and try to rot in the slime of worldly life? No! No! This is not proper for you. Now get up; and know thyself. Then you will realise how childish is your dejection. Now the current

of tradition of Religion is still running; so the coming darkness has not cast its shadow. Even as I think I tremble! A time will come when in Maths, free choultries, Vedic recitations will discontinue and they will become the home for snakes and reptiles and they will be filled with the barkings

brayings of dogs and asses. The leaves of the books of the learned Pandits will be thrown into dustbin. Everywhere the pessimistic illusion theory will be a popular cult. Temples illuminated by resplendent lights become dismantled and exposed to the severe heat of the solar rays by day and by night are haunted by owls and bats. Dust raised in the street by the traffic will be incense before god in the temples. Men forgetting their spiritual heritage degenerate so low that they lead the bestial life. Bread and butter will be the main occupation in life and the keen competition would crush the souls mercilessly. For all this the only remedy is that being coronated the Kingdom of Vedanta, you should take up holy orders, your pre-occupations being preaching and teaching the principles of religion and delivering discourses on the problems of philosophy. You must bring the mass to believe in God by writing books and convincing them of the endless and eternal powers and benefaction of God. A householder's life will be a hindrance to full devotion and sacrifice in the cause of Dharma. Every pious deed done by a recluse yields fruit hundred times exercising thousand fold influence on society. I am devoted to you and I do not think of another ascetic even in a dream." *

"I give out to you my last thought. You are destined to occupy this place. None can change the decree of destiny. I am destined to make resort to you. If you reconcile yourself to the inevitable destiny you will be blessed with all

* स्वप्नेवाहं न ममाम्यभिमुखः ॥ - श्रीराघवेन्द्रविजयः

success."-Thus saying the divine figure whispered the sacred incantation into his ears and disappeared.

It was very difficult to describe the state of mind of Venkatacharya. It was, as it were, he recovered his lost sight after many years. The divine lustre, the fluent spontaneity of speech of the divine left an indelible impression on his mind. The sacred incantation whispered into his ears washed away all his sins. He just shut his eyes to chew the cud of experience of the previous night. He fell into a trance and had a clear vision of *Rama*, *Narasimha*, *Krishna* and *Vedavyasa*. When he came out of the trance he had no inkling of doubt or suspicion. He had a clear revelation to him of his spiritual career. Overcome with gratitude he bowed down on his bed and unreservedly surrendered himself to divine dispensation and praised His inconceivable ways. His memory was awakened to deeply submerged experiences of *Prahlad* exhorting the children of the *Daityas* and *Chandrikacharya's* good words to *Vijayeendra*. At last he thought that it was best to submit to the words of advice of his swamiji. He just cast a casual glance at the face of his sleeping wife. Her face had withered due to excess of sorrow and lamentation of the last night. This silent sorrow was writ large in her face. His tender heart melted to see it. He wrenched his eyes from her, and never directed them again in that direction.

He got up from his bed and had finished his morning routine. By that time Saraswati Bai finished her work. She was not inclined to talk about his Sanyasa. But one thing struck her and that was her husband's face had no longer the worried appearance of yesterday night. Instead a calm lustre was radiating from it. The pleasant smile showed a firm resolution, a permanent settlement deep below it. It struck awe and fear in the heart of his wife. He seemed far

beyond any earthly measure of estimate and could remain no longer hers.

Their usual pleasant ways, smiling exchange of glances and sunny humour did not mark their behaviour. On the other hand Venkatacharya as if groaning under heavy responsibility was serious and Saraswatibai was perplexed and remained in confused indifference. He finished his bath and worship and went to the Math. The Swamiji was deeply immersed in contemplation. Venkatacharya bowed down and sat before him. The Swamiji read his face and came to know that he was very eager to tell him something. So he exclaimed with surprise that Venkatacharya has come a bit earlier, and asked him if he had considered his proposal.

Venkatacharya looked on all sides and assured himself that none was there; said that he had come to place before him the same matter.

Swamiji:- What is that?

Venkatacharya:- "I did not heed the beneficial words of the Swamiji. Indifferently. I left you and went home. By your blessings, I saw *Vidya Laxmi* (Saraswati) yesterday night"-Then he narrated in brief how she had admonished him.

The Swamiji was surprised to hear this. He thought that it was very auspicious that Venkatacharya saw the splendid vision of the Devi; Thinking this to be the sweet will of Hari he thought it was not proper to wait any longer. He gave permission to Venkatacharya to perform the Upanayan ceremony of his son, and blessed him with Mantrakshata.

The Upanayan ceremony was performed attended with the pomp and piety. The Swamiji himself initiated him into

the secret service of Mantropadesh. But the pomp was touched with a tinge of sadness as this was the last act of Venkatacharya as a house holder. Now the only hindrance to his sanyasa was his wife Saraswati Bai. The Swamiji knew that she was much attached to her husband and her life had an original tie with her husband so that any cut that severs the connection saps her life. Expecting great trouble from her, if the ceremony was performed at Kumbhakonam, the Swamiji moved to Tanjore with Venkatacharya. Raghunatha Bhupal, the then ruler of Tanjore, was greatly devoted to the Math and hence the ceremony of taking holy orders if conducted in his court would be more in the fitness of things.

TAKING HOLY ORDERS

The King welcomed the swamiji with royal pomp and took him to his palace where the Swamiji performed his worship with much grandeur befitting the royal host.

The news of giving initiation to Venkatacharya spread on all sides; and many pandits from all quarters hurried to Tanjore to grace the occasion. the swamiji settled 1543 Shalivahana Phalgun Shudda second day to be the auspicious day (1621 AD) for the ceremony.

That morning Venkatacharya went through all rites prior to taking holy orders; and when the auspicious moment came, the Swamiji gave him sanyasa in a stately assembly in the court of Raghunatha Bhupa, filled with Pandits and the elite of the public. As was formerly hinted to him in his dream the Swamiji named him *Raghavendra* and initiated him into holy incantation like Pranava and others. Then sixty four arts (चतुःषष्टिकला) were imparted to him. Then

began the initiation ceremony for the Kingdom of Vedic lore. He was made the supreme head by bathing him with holy waters filled in the conch shell. Then the Swamiji advised him in words befitting the occasion:-

“Now Venkatacharya, you now have become Raghavendra. That is the sweet will of the supreme Lord Hari. The new appellation you have received is given by the Lord Himself. In wealth you surpass *Kubera*. May you be beneficent to all, like *Sri Rama*; with his blessings you will be doing good to all. Be piously devoted to God like my late grand Guru; - *Surendra*, get the fame of my great Guru-*Vijayeendra*, Be a successful disputant like me.* Under your rule our Math would prosper and your name would be remembered as long as the Sun and Moon would shine in the sky. No doubt you will be very popular, as you have abundance of religious merit. So you deserve to be the benefactor of mankind, May God *Mula Rama* to whom we are dedicated shower all blessings on you.” - Thus saying he stopped. Tears fell in torrents from the eyes of the Swamiji and gratitude solemnly settled on the disciple's face. It proved to be a thrilling occasion to all. The King elated with joy bowed down to the Master and the disciple again and again. All assembled cheered lustily.

Shri Sudheendra Swami gave charge of the Math to Shri Raghavendra Swami. Doing so he entrusted the insignia of the Math like *Mula Rama Digvijaya Rama* and *Jaya*

तस्य नाम स ददे सदाशिषा राजराज इव राजितश्रिया।

रामचन्द्र इव भद्रभाजनं तत्कृपेव जगतां हिते रतः॥

श्रीसुरेन्द्रवदयं तपस्यया श्रीजयीन्द्र इव कीर्तिसम्पदा।

विश्रुतोहमिव वादसङ्गरे राघवेन्द्र यतिराट् समेधताम्॥

- श्रीराघवेन्द्रविजयः

Rama (these are the idols) two of the hand pressed sand (व्यासमुष्टी) both given to Acharya by Shri Vedavyas, works on *Vedanta*, two chouries, white Umbrella, (श्वेतछत्र) Sahanai Mela, Golden Palanquin and others. These royal honours became the emblem of the spiritual supreme head of Vedanta Kingdom Shri *Raghavendra Swami*.

Shri Sudheendra Swamin was highly pleased to see his disciple devoutly worshipping the Lord and to hear the learned discourses every day. He blessed him heartily and started on a journey to the north. He stayed for some time on the banks of the river Tungabhadra near the Brindavan of his Guru's Guru chandrikacharya and in 1623 A.D. he breathed his last and approached the feet of Lord Krishna.

Hearing the shocking news of her husband taking Sanyasashrama, Saraswati Bai was stunned and fell uncounscious. Coming to herself after some time she got up, She consoled herself. She was already initiated into the secrets of the Vedic Lore by her husband, as she was keenly intelligent and sincerely devoted to her husband. She remembered many reasons given by the Shastras to allay the pangs of her grief. Moreover she must take pride in her husband for his unique position. She thought she might now take to penance and charities and take to the path of spiritual discipline. All these consolations did not stop the agony of her soul. The future of her life entirely depended upon her husband, and when he himself was not available to her why should she continue to live all all? When even the sight of her husband was denied to her, life had no charm for her. Living in the next moment was unbearable to her. The storm that rose in her mind, clouded her conscience and she could not decide what was right, Did not Parvati give up her body by Yogic practice when she merely heard her Lord

being blamed and accused? These words constantly dinned into her ears; she decided to commit suicide. But all kinds of suicide are prohibited by Shastras, as they are conducive to sin. But before separation from her husband suicide was lesser evil to her. Thus deciding suddenly she fell into a well and expired.

Perhaps it was the result of her accumulated sins [Karma] of her former lives. But there was no doubt that she would soon be released from this ghostly life. She appeared as a ghost before the swamiji who with a yogic sight understood what it was and sprinkled holy water over her body. Soon what she was to suffer from her former sins terminated and she was finally released. In memory of her, even now in her family on any occasion of ceremony [married women with husbands alive] are accorded special attention and treatment of respect.

YADAVENDRA

While on tour Yadavendra heard the news that Shree Sudheendra, his Guru dubbed Venkatacharya the supreme head of the Math after giving him holy orders. He rejoiced to hear this news and being very eager to see the new head came of Kumbhakonam Shri Raghavendra received him with due respect, he being senior to him, having received holy order prior to himself. He bowed down to Shri Yadavendra and offered him the idols of the Math to be worshipped by him. Not accepting any emblems of the Math, only worshipping Shri Mula Ramadeva for some days, he left the place returning the idols to Shri Raghavendra. He came to the Krishna River and at Mudamal he expired.

THE DAILY ROUTINE OF SRI RAGHAVENDRA

His name was highly significant and full of meaning. It was so suggested in a dream to Shri Sudheendra. It was the holy appellation of Shri Mularamadeva the highest emblem of the Math; and Shri Sudheendra while ordering his disciple said—"He was as holy as *Ramabhadra* and as beneficent to the world as the memory of *Shri Rama*". By the grace of God Shri Raghavendra throughout his life and his Guru knew this before hand. the good natured people, tempted to go astray by evil influence need the guidance from such Gurus of spiritual insight. And the Name Raghavedra suggests this belief. The Word "अघ" means these in "घति" means destroys, वे is the desired object "रति" is gives. "Thus washing away all sins helps to get the desired objects" is the meaning of Raghavendra. Therefore Gopaladas has sung the uncommon power of Shri Raghavendra thus:- every letter that forms the word Raghavendra has meaning and the total meaning is that he robs us of all our sins and yields the desired object. Appannacharaya in his famous "Guru Stotra" corroborates the same meaning.

Being free from sin his body, work, knowledge and even his name are all pure and holy. His personality impressed others that he must be one of the denizens of heaven. His body emitted the lustre of purified gold. Peace, security were writ large on the face. It was an index to the extra ordinary contentment coming from God-realisation. No one would miss the light of eyes. Ears were adorned with Tulasi. The nose was marked with vertical lines of *Chandan* running up the fore-head. His tounge was the stage on which the Goddess of letters danced. His broad chest assured us a kind heart and unflinching courage. Long arms are said to be the sign of extra ordinary person. His feet

were holy with pilgrimage. Thus mere sight of this unique personality would impress and inspire devotion in him, and encourage people to rely on him for their final release.

The daily routine of Shri Raghavendra was simply a series of dedicated services to God. Though Prahlad, the gem among the *Asuras*, desired only humble service to God, Narasimhadeva bestowed on him sovereignty for a long period of time. So also Shri Raghavendra could not but enjoy royal happiness as religious merits due to the contact of God in the former life followed him even in this life. The little misery he was destined to suffer, he suffered from the crushing poverty he had. Now he must enjoy the benefit to heap of *Punya* alone. Therefore in the early hours of the morning the bards came and praised him as if he were a prince. The Swamiji would wake up and meditate upon God and his deeds and then walking from it would come out sides. The devotees waiting outside to hear a discourse on Bhagavata would have the Darshanam of the swamiji which would purify them. He would then visit Tulasi and God *Hanuman* and riding in a sedan, and repeating many stotras like *Gajendra Moksha*, he would go to the River Kaveri for an early dip. The morning was very pleasant on the river bank. He attended to calls of nature; then he would clean his teeth and according to the rite he would dip thrice and have plunge. He would repeat incantations of of eight syllable (अष्टाक्षर) and six (षडक्षर) twelve (द्वादशाक्षर) After a formal mud bath (मृत्तिकास्नान) he would undergo the regular course of purifying bath accompanied with selected Mantras; then giving offerings of water (अर्घ्य) to gods. He would take holy teertham of Shri Vishnu. He would wear dry clothes of red colour and wear all marks of Shri Vishnu (मुद्रा). He would now be shining like the resplendent sun. He would retire to the Tapovan and telling the beads accompanied with Pranava

(प्रणवजप) would worshiup Vyasa Mushti and listen to the purana recited by learned Brahmins. He would go round (प्रदक्षिण) the Brindvan of his Guru's Guru Shri Vijayeendra Teertha; and then would walk to the Math. Stopping on the way he would bow down to Kumbheshvara.

As soon as he reached the Math he would begin his lessons on Bramha sutras. While teaching he would make reference to other systems of Indian Philosophy for comparison and some times for contrast. On the whole he would show that Brahma Sutra propounded that Bramhan is Narayana full of unlimited and excellent qualities, completely immune from defects. He is approached by the seekers and he blesses them with absolution. Shri Madhva finds this as the central ideal of the Sutras; and Teekacharya illuminated the same idea in his superb gloss; Chandrikacharya argued it out with convincing reasons.

Once a Pandit put a query to the Swamiji.-“The explanation you gave is not satisfactory. Who is Narayana? This is not warranted by any evidence. The only thing known by experience is “I” (अहं). No other thing can be adduced by experience. Perception or inference does not admit anyother thing as real. Vedas prove Bramhan as the utimate reality which is not different from the Jeeva* or “I” adduced by experience, according to the Vedas. As the Bramhan and the individual souls are one, and as the soul is known to us every moment, the Sutras need not make an attempt to explain the thing known to us. Besides difference, high and low state are all false. “I” also disappears, pure intelligence remains and that alone is true. If so, how can

Brahman have any attributes at all; and that cannot be Narayana having auspicious attributes. therefore we need not know him and worship him. When Maya, which is the root cause for the appearance of manifold, disappears-this difference and mundane manifoldness also disappears and Bramhan alone remains. And that is Moksha. Threrfore it is wrong to suppose that we get Moksha by other means. As for other aims like reaching heaven and other worlds, it is enough if we perform enjoined duties or Karma. Therefore this enquiry into the essence or Bramhan futile." Thus he argued.

This objection raised by the opponent gave good scope for the Swamiji to elucidate the real essence of ultimate reality for the benefit of pious disciples. Thus he put forth the very substance of the Shastras.

"Your objection is not valid. For daily experience alone cannot deliver the goods. Perception alone is not the guarantor of the ultimate reality. It is beyond the reach of perception. Man is superior to other animals because he is gifted with intelligence to know this reality which is beyond the five senses. Daily life often reaches the skirt of this unseen reality. A healthy eye sees what a defective eye cannot see; an eye aided with instruments will see what an unaided eye cannot see. Emotions beyond the experience of a lay man are enjoyed by the poets and artists who indulge in them. Miracles and wonder in this world give scope for an unlimited power guiding and controlling the universe. Such an inconceivable and ununderstandable reality is beyond the reach of all our faculties of understanding. We must approach the source which explains this inexplicable being. That is the revealed Vedas. They are known as Sadagamas to those who are given to thinking. This source is not a

creation of the modern times; but it has been existing since eternity; It is as eternal as eternity itself. So it is uncreated and ever lasting. Not only belief but reason also is essential to know its real meaning. With the help of canons of interpretations based on solid reasoning it will be possible to reconcile apparent contradictions which will have the way to the real purport of the Vedas. That must be churned out by impartial discussion and pure reasoning.

The Vedas are mainly devoted to the treatment of Bramhan. No doubt here and there you find stray sentences propounding the identity of Bramhan and the individual should referred to by "I" in daily experience. But these sentences must be interpreted by the use of canon of interpretation. If the apparent and the inconsistent meaning is to be accepted as the real purport then there need not be any big works for the exegesis of the Vedic lore. Had the individual soul been the Bramhan himself all the activities in the mundane world would stop. It is no use explaining away the existence of the world as mere illusion. Rather it would be better if we discuss fully the sentences that treat the identity, taking into consideration the context the beginning and the end of the passage (उपक्रम - उपसंहार) rules of grammar to interpret the compound words; reconciliation of inconsistencies and contradictions and compare them with secular sentences describing identity between different things and arrive at a meaning not detrimental to the essential sovereignty and supremacy of Bramhan. This will be, of course, a better interpretation than the former one. The Bramha Sutras have set this task before them. Had identity been the ultimate meaning of the Vedas Bramha Sutras would not have enforced enquiry and investigation into the nature of Bramhan on the aspirant. The real seeker after

truth cannot but study the Bramha Sutras to know Bramhan. Shri Madhva has shown what the purport of the Bramha Sutras is. So Narayana the abode of pure attributes free from defect is Parabramhan. To meditate on him is the aim of this life. To realise him and bask in the sun of his favour is the fulfilment of the life. Life is full of love, not love that is hollow and humbling. But love that is tested and found genuine on the touch-stone of joys and sorrows. God is the source of that love. And its fulfilment is supreme bliss. This is the lesson taught by all the Sastras; this is the principle of life." Thus the Swamiji expatiated on this interesting topic and stopped. His disciples enjoyed this lucid discourse. The man who had raised the objection was ashamed of his own ignorance; and bowing down to him took leave of the Swamiji.

In the daily routine of the lessons some knotty problems cropped up for discussion, which continued till mid day so that the Swamiji would get up for bath and puja. Having his plunge in the lake he would begin his worship. The idol that has been worshipped in all the four Yugas and by Madhvacharya in Kaliyug is now being worshipped by Sri Swamiji this is really unique. In the mantap studded with jewels the upperstage shining with the idol of Shri Lasminarayana on Garuda along with his inseparable fiance, appears like Swetadweepa (श्वेतद्वीप) On the middle stage as in Ananthasana (अनन्तासन) the idol of Sri Mula Rama, worshipped by Bramha himself, in the midst of his own forms is sitting in stately pomp. The noble demeanour of Digvijaya Rama and Jaya Rama added to the beauty and pleasant freshness on the face of Shri Mula Rama by contrast. On the lower stage called as Vaikuntha (वैकुण्ठ) is standing the Vaikuntha Vasudeva along with his own idol of

worship Shri Krishna prepared in gold by himself. These he would worship as per prescribed rites. Daily the Vyasamuthika is bathed. Water pots are decorated, the different stages are meditated upon for seating the different forms of Narayana. Lord himself is invoked to be present in the idols till the worship is over the paraphernalia is also conceived in the mind. After daily worship and offering he would accept alms in the form of meals. After meals he would teach grammar and logic. Then he would call the local Pandits and would have a friendly discussion on the topics of Vedanta and this would be done in the spirit of entertainment and enlightenment which ultimately would be dedicated to Lord Krishna as a piece of worship.

In the evening after the lessons were over he would have the evening bath in that lake and would then commence the worship with offering of milk and fruits and Arati in the gold plate. Meditating on Him for a while he would pray to him. He would often fall into a trance, waking up he would speak out choking words, saturated with devotion which was enlivened by the contact with Lord's feet. People who had this experience of meditation, hearing these words, would get the spiritual infection and have a thrilling horripilation, with a flow of tears of joy. He would sing in that ecstatic joy a song composed by himself, which would surge up from his rapturous heart.

"To-day Lord Govind show me your feet oh! Lord Mukund!

Oh! Lord of charming face, son of Nanda and Yeshoda, who lifted Mandar mountain, Lord of supreme bliss, Lord of Mahalakshmi Lord, being tied by this mundane life I have been tormented and teased; Being unable to find my path I am exhausted in this life.

Accept as your child, being blind to my failures. Oh! father of Manmath, Krishna, save me, Oh Father! In my ignorance I led a cowardly life. Oh! Hari I was not attached to you firmly I never attempted to see you; never did I sing in praise of thy prowess. Oh! You charmer Krishna, I earnestly pray you! I became a burden to the world; went astaray and fell into the company of the wicked. None to give succor to me but you to whom I am now coming. Oh! brave Venugopal ford me across to the other shore, Oh! Hari,"

This rapturous song flooding with delight swept the hearers off their feet and plunged them in supreme bliss. They also joined the Swamiji in prayers forgetting themselves completely. After a long time they would wake up. The Swamiji would bless them with parting coloured rice (फलमन्नाक्षता) and they would depart.

THE SWAMIJI'S TOUR TO TANJORE

Many years had elapsed since Swamiji had taken holy orders. There was political unrest in Cholamandala. The Naik of Tanjore, Vajaya Raghava Naik, in 1642 had to face invasions from Madura, Vellure, Mysore, and Bijapur. He was defeated and to save his life he had to sue for peace. There was plunder and arson in the country and closely in its wake entered terrible famine (दुर्भिक्ष). Vijayaraghava was very liberal and charitable as his forefathers Chavvappa Naik and Raghunatha Naik. so he spent money from his treasury and fed his subjects. But famine assumed still more terrible form and he sheddered with fear. As a last resource the much harassed Kind approached the Swamiji who was having his tour nearby, thinking that he would save the situation. he fell on the feet of the

Swamiji. The Swamiji could read past, present and future and knowing that the famine would not abate soon, went to Tanjore in order to help the King in his difficulty. He stayed there for twelve years and spend money from his pocket and helped the poor. And by miraculous ways replenished the coffers of the King as soon as all the money was spent. Thus with the blessings of the Swamiji the King and his subjects were saved from a terrible calamity.

Then Swamiji performed special penances and meditations for the return of plenty and happiness of the subjects. He had some sacrifices performed. As a result, rains set in and the people of chola were, as it were, reborn. The King much elated with joy offered to the Swamiji a necklace of jewels. The Sacrifice came to an end and the Swamiji, while the Lord of sacrifice was being worshipped, offered the necklace to the god of fire. The King was annoyed and agitated over this. He was enraged to see his gift thrown in the fire and thought that he was insulted thereby. Reading his mind the Swamiji laughed in his sleeves and pitying him prayed to Parasurama abiding in the Fire-God. The necklace of jewel came out glittering. People assembled were amazed to see this miracle and stood still. All bowed down to the Swamiji with much devotion seeing his miraculous powers. As for the King he sank within himself through fear and devotion, fell at the feet of the Swamiji and prayed earnestly that he should be pardoned. The Swamiji blessed him specially and returned to Kumbhakonam.

TOURING AND THE MIRACLES

In those days there were no facilities for transport. So in order to keep alive the Aryan culture among the people

of distant parts, the religious teachers had to tour far and wide spreading the gospel of truth and love. So travel and touring formed an important part in the life of every great teacher. So our Swamiji undertook touring to preach to the people the importance of pilgrimage to sacred Places and rivers. First his eastern tour began.

Even on tours he would give lessons daily to students in Shastras right from Pramana paddhati to Chandrika. Hundreds of students used to take benefit of these teachings. In big places Pandits used to attend the assembly presided over by the Swamiji and show their proficiency in different branches of learning and then they would get due recognition and honorarium from the Swamiji and depart.

Going in the eastern direction he reached a place called *Paripurna* Nagara and bowing down to the Bhagavan started for Kamalalaya. There he worshipped Mahalakshmi and went towards Ardha Nareeswara. He with great devotion propitiated Mahadeva there.

Then he reached a place where the river Kaveri poured her holy waters into the ocean. There he stayed for some time having a dip in the sea and teaching and preaching the pupils and the public.

Then he traced his steps towards Champakeshwar whom he duly worshipped and then reached Rameswar. There he bathed at Setu Bandhan, visited Darbhashayana Rama and Setu Madhava and then reached Alagiri. From there he wended his way towards Ananta Shayana. There he paid his visits to Ananta Padmanabha and Janardanadeva and then came to the district of Tinnavelli on the Bank of Tamraparni. On the Bank of that river there was a Bramhin who had been excommunicated by the community and thus

was very much harassed, and who came to the Swamiji to raise the excommunication and to bid the society to take him in. So the Swamiji knew his real nature, and asked him to undergo purificatory and penitential rites. Then he sprinkled water rendered holy by the touch of the conchshell (शङ्खोदक) over that man and thus purified him. The citizens of the place, however questioned the Swamiji how they should know that he was purified. The Swamiji convinced them that he was by nature a good soul and the conchshell water had that efficacy of purification. People thanked the Swamiji for having enlightened them in that matter. From Tinnavelli he came to Madhura. (*south*)

Just as Benaras was known as the famous centre of learning in Northern India so also Madhura was known for its learning in the South. Here you could find Pandits adept in their own branches of learning. Any Pandit entering Madhura did not go out without being tested by these Pandits. The Naiks of Madhura were as powerful as rulers of Mysore, Tanjore and Vijayanagar, they had well established themselves in the South. They were great patrons of Sanskrit and regional learning and literature. So Madhura was an abode for many Pandits.

GREAT SUCCESS AT MADHURA

When Swamiji went to Madhura, Tirumala Naik ruled there (1623-1659). His minister was one Neelakantha Dixit. Who was the grand son of Appayya Dixit. He was very orthodox, learned and a great advocate of Shaivadwaita.

Advaities adopt the system of Bhatta Meemamsakas to conduct the routine business of the Shastras. The Dixit planned to test the knowledge of the Swamiji in this sys-

tem of Meemamsakas. Objections and doubts raised by him in this system were easily cleared by this Swamiji. By this time the Swamiji had much advanced in writing works and he had finished his own compilation of Bhatta Sangraha. He had epitomised the principles of Bhatta system. Dixit went through it. He was simply astonished to see the depth of his study and the grasp of the subject which the Swamiji had shown in that work. He placed that book on the State elephant and had a splendid procession in the streets of the city. [1] Tirumala Naika gave a grand reception to the Swamiji. The Swamiji paid his respects to Sundareswar and Meenakshi Devi of the place and came over to Sriranga. this place was sacred to Ranganatha, wher he stayed for some time. Then he began his Northern tour.

THE DISPUTANTS OF VELLORE

The Swamiji first reached Namakal and worshipped Shri Narasimha with devotion. From there he came to Vellore. Vellore was then the capital of Vijayanagar kings-Venkatapati Raya and Shri Rama Devaraya, the fourth. There were two Shaiva Pandits by name Veerabhadra and Bhairava Bhatta. They came to Swamiji for discussion. They were very learned Pandits. They had a number of disciples and were highly respected at the court of the

[1] मन्त्रि श्रीनीलकण्ठाभिषमखिमणिना भक्तान्त्रानुबन्धे
ग्रन्थे तत्त्वदीये करिणि गुणविदारोपितेभ्यर्हणाय।
कीर्ति स्ते राघवेंद्रव्रतिविबुधमणे नूनमन्यूनवेगात्
दिङ्नागानारुरुक्षुः स्वयमपि सहसा धावदष्टौ दिगन्तान्॥

king. The discussions went on for two or three days [2]The King was surprised to see the erudition and impressive personality. he decreed grants of villages and lands in favour of the Swamiji. This is the second grand success he achieved. Thus he finished his southern tour and went to the South Kanara District.

Here, formerly, Shri Madhvacharya had been given a grand reception by the King Jayasimha. Shri Raghavendra went to Vishnumangala and adored the Bhagavan with due rites. Then he turned towards subrahmanya, where every one would be granted immediately his prayer; and here he rested for a while.

STAY AT UDUPI

Then the Swamiji moved towards Udupi. He stayed in the Math which his Guru's Guru had acquired. When he stood before Shri Krishna his joy knew no bounds. He fell into a trance completely by forgetting his surroundings. Then he sang and danced. Though he had intuitively seen and realised many forms of Narayana still he had a special liking and attachment to the form of Shri Krishna.

He had come into this Kali age only to worship Shri Krishna and he had done the same in his former Avatar. Though he daily worshipped Shri Mula Rama, still his heart would go out to Shri Krishna to fall into ecstatic raptures. Therefore he adopted the *Pseudonym Venugopala* while composing songs. At the sight of Shri Krishna his

[2] सोय मल्लपुरिमैखमङ्गे वीरमद्र इतिविश्रुत विद्वान्।
नर्मणैव परिभूय नरेन्द्राद् ग्रामरत्नमचिरात्समगृह्णात्॥

- राघवेन्द्रविजयः

mind attained tranquility and peace. Here he earnestly took to writing books which was the main work of his life.

The deity of knowledge had ordered him to write a commentary on *Chandrika*. Accordingly he began to write "Prakasa on Chandrika." But it was stopped in the middle. The Swamiji thought that elucidation of the meaning of the Sutras themselves was more important, than a commentary on "*Chandrika*" which is a commentary of the Sutras; so he undertook to explain the meaning of the Sutras by writing *Nyaya Muktaavali* which intends to summarise the discussion in the whole of the Adikarana which is a consistent group of Sutras treating a single topic to its logical end. This work is posterior to *Tantra Deepika* Chronologically. After these two works were completed the Swamiji wrote Parimala the famous gloss on the *Nyaya Sudha*. Then he completed the half finished Prakasha and dedicated all these works to Udipi Krishna, the God worshipped constantly by Shri Madhva.

Just then it was summer of the year *Shubhakrit* (1663 A.D.). The great bath, Mahabhisheka, to Shri Mula Rama on Rama Navami was to be given in the holy vicinity of Shri Krishna. Elaborate preparations were made for this ceremony which was conducted on a grand scale in the temple of Shri Krishna. Everyone who was present was delighted to witness this function. The Swamiji's joy was beyond measure. He felt an unusual thrilling sensation while participating in the function, due to the divine presence which filled the whole atmosphere. All the services he had rendered thus for he dedicated to Lord Krishna.

By this time the Swamiji had given discourses on *Chandrika* nearly ten times. This was a kind of sacrifice.

Thus some important incidents of his life occurred at Udupi. So while leaving Udupi tears burst out from his eyes. Though he, in the another form viz *Prahlad*, has been worshipping even to-day *Sri Narahri* in Harivarsha Khanda and in the present avatar Sri Mula Rama, the presiding deity of the Math, he liked very much the form of Udupi Krishna, who would present himself before him whenever he would shut his eyes; so he made a gold idol of Shri Krishna holding the churning handle in his hand and worshipped daily in the Math. And this idol is in the Math, (Raghavendra Swamy Math Nanjangud) even today.

THE SWAMIJI'S JOURNEY TO THE COURT OF MYSORE

In the course of his further tours the Swamiji arrived at Mysore. Then the ruling King was Dodda Deva Raya. The capital was Shrinagapatna. Already the Swamiji's fame had spread far and wide. Besides Shri Vibhudendra Teerth had been received by the King with great pomp and had been granted a gift of a large estate for the use of the Math, requesting him to stay at Nanjangud permanently. Since then Nanjangud became the Head quarters of the Math. Vijayendra also had passed by Mysore, Nanjangud while going to Udupi. Therefore Swamiji came to Nanjangud. Dodda Devaraya also came to Nanjangud on the river Kapila and met Swamiji there. In all humility he begged Swamiji to proceed to the capital. It was the month of Ashada and ascetics should now stay in one place for *Chaturmasya*. So the King requested the Swamiji to stay at Srirangapatnam. The Swamiji also desired to spend some time near Ranganath and accepted the invitation of the King, who with all royal pomp and state honours met the swamiji outside the city and took him in the city in a

grand procession. That day the Swamiji performed his pooja in the palace itself. Next day was the eleventh day of Ashadha, a day of fasting and prayer and it was the fasting day in "*Chaurmasya*". So the King again requested Swamiji to continue his stay and break his fast on the twelfth day morning in the palace only. The Swamiji appreciated his earnestness and complied with his request and had his pooja in the palace. On the eleventh day (एकादशी) after the pooja the King gave the gift of a Village (6-7-1663). Nalluru or Devarajpura with due ceremonies and rites. Besides, he gave rich diamonds and other precious stones to be used for the worship and adoration of Shri Mula Ramadeva.

The Swamiji finished his "*Chaturmasya*" and went to Ramnathpur where he bathed in the holy Kaveri and worshipped Bhagavan.

The Swamiji went towards the north. On the way he went to Chitradurga. There was in the Math a devotee who was attending on the Swamiji everyday very sincerely often request the Swamiji in all childishness to get him final beatitude or mukti. The Swamiji would simply laugh away his ignorance. Chitradurga was not only a historical place but it was a holy place, because the Pandavas had visited the place in their wanderings. It is considered that Shri Gopala Krishna on the hill was consecrated by Janamejaya. Down below there is Hanuman of five bells which was worshipped by the Pandavas. So the Swamiji stayed there for some time. One day casually he called his disciple who was always asking for Mukti and said to him...."If you do as we tell you, You will get Mukti".

His joy knew no bounds. He said he was ready. He

bathed and performed his *Sandhya*; then the Swamiji gave him *Panchagavya*, [the purificatory mixture] After the penitentiary ceremony was over, a pyre of wood was prepared. He was initiated into the *Beejakshra* mantra and then asked to enter into the blazing fire. With a smiling face, a light heart and a quiet mind he took the dust of the Swamiji's feet and bore it on his head and jumped into the fire. Some spectators grumbled that it was unjust on the part of the Swamiji to have killed an innocent simpleton with the bait of gaining Moksha, for his devilish pleasure. The Swamiji who could read the minds, understood this, called them and asked them to hear the heavenly bell ringing while he was riding the heavenly plane (विमान) to the other world. They actually heard it and these mischief mongers were shamefully silenced. They prostrated before Swamiji and begged pardon.

Then the Swamiji toured in the North Karnataka districts. He went to Gadag and visited Veeranarayana. There is a village named *Kireetagiri* near Gadag. This belonged to one *Venkata Desai*. He invited Shri Raghavendra Swamiji to his house; Those were summer days and mangoes were available in abundance. The juice was extracted in a big pot to be served for all, at the time of meals. The young child of Desai, while playing fell into the pot and died. All were engaged in seeing the pooja; and so the Desai forgot to look after the child. After some time the Desai began to search and found the dead child immersed in the pot of the mango juice and he was deeply distressed. He had arranged all this with a view to be blessed with the favours of the Swamiji but all that was foiled and now the Swamiji had to fast. So his grief was past all words. This incident spread from ear to ear till at

last it reached the ears of the Swamiji who called the Desai and asked him to bring the dead body of the child. The body was washed and laid down before the Swamiji who sprinkled holywater over the dead body repeating certain hymns. It was an accidental death and the child was revived in no time. Desai was greatly elated with joy. Immediately he transferred the village Kriritagiri in favour of the Swamiji so that Lord Krishna may be pleased with the donation. Even now the village is a gift to Raghavendra Swami Math.

There are many such examples of miracles of saving the lives of persons who had died not naturally but accidentally. Once the same Swamiji brought back to life his servant who had died on the day of his nuptials by dashing his head against the frame of the door.

From Kiritagiri he came to Hubli. There also he saved the son of navab of Savanur who had died of snake bite. The Navab was highly pleased and gave the villages of Krishnapur and other Villages as gift.

He showed the wonderful power of Vedic mantras to those who were not in the fold of the four castes. The Veerashaivas hate the Vaishnavas; and they tried to test the Swamiji's wonderful powers.

Once the Desai of Shirasangi, a Veerashaiva, forfeited the lands of Brahmins in his own Deshgati; and when the Swamiji came to his place he placed a long dry and dead wooden piece (मुसल) and said "The dry wood must sprout out; then I think that your mantras have efficacy and you are true Brahmins; otherwise I call you all hypocrites". He was not open to reasoning and therefore the Swamiji could not convince him by arguments that the Vedas must be ac-

cepted as great guarantors of knowledge to deliver Spiritual goods. So in order to show the high efficacy of Vedic mantras the Swamiji had to take recourse to the miraculous deeds. So the Swamiji accepted the challenge of the Desai and sprinkled holy water on the dry wood for some days. It sprouted like a green plant. The Desai had thought this to be impossible and he was simply amazed to see this wonderful phenomena. he expressed regret for his hasty remarks and paid him high respects. He entertained a respectful attitude towards Brahmins and their community.

Then Swamiji went towards Pandharpur. On the way the wife of one of his servants delivered a child in a place where there was neither shade nor water. Immediately the Swamiji pouring some water from his Kamandalum gave rise to a puddle of water and brought some shadow to cover and cool the mother and the child, and thus saved them from the scorching heat of the burning sun and insatiable thirst.

Thus Swamiji showing his powerful religious efficacy wherever he went, at last reached Pandharapur. In the mean while he met an opponent named Shesha and had a long discussion on a subject from the Vedanta. The Swamiji banked upon the book "*Vagvaikhari*" by Shri Vijayeendra Swamiji for his arguments and thus silenced him.

He Stood before Panduranga and his heart leapt with joy. Then he proceeded towards Kholhapur. After the fall of Vijayanagar not only the whole of the south, but in the whole of India, Tanjore alone was the seat of Aryan culture Shahji Bhonsale helped his son Shivaji to build another

Hindu Empire on the basis of Aryan culture. It is said Shivaji was helped to a great extent in this undertaking by a statesman of extraordinary abilities. Naro panth Hanamante, a follower of Shri Madhva. His place of activities was Kolhapur. So the Swamiji, the Royal Guru of (राजगुरु) Tanjore Court was received at Kolhapur with magnificent pomp and stately ostentation. He also stayed there for some time. He went so far as Nasik and bathed in the holy river Godavari and returned. On the way a Bramhin going from Bijapur to Chikodi had fallen in a forest almost dead, scorched by the burning rays of the sun. The Swamiji used his wonderful powers gave him water and saved him from sure death.

Bijapur was the capital of a big kingdom. Then Ibrahim Adil Shaw II was ruling. Though he was a muslim he had great tolerance towards Hinduisim. He had great faith in the Brahmins. Seeing his inclination and love of Hinduism the muslims called him "Jagad Guru"

The Swami with all his followers went to Bijapur. The Nawab accorded him a hearty welcome and a royal reception. There were in his court many Bramhins of different sects. They all admired the learning of the Swamiji and being convinced of the truth of his teachings became his disciples: and bore the signs of the Vaishnavas. The Nawab being very much pleased not only gave the Swamiji the title of "Jagadguru" but the royal emblem of white umbrella*

Swamiji left Bijapur and came to Alur on the river Krishna; there he bathed in the river. Here he wrote

* वादिनोपि परिभूय विशिष्य श्वेत्मातपनिवारणमाप्नोत्।
- राघवेन्द्रविजयः

Bhavadeepa, a commentary on *Tatva Prakashika* and *Tatva Manjari* a gloss on *Sutra Anu Bhashya*. From there he went to the east and reached a temple of Hanuman near Manavi in the district of Raichur and stayed there. Then the vow of Chaturmasya had begun. After his morning dip and worship he was engaged in writing a book. He saw a Chandala (हरिजन) standing near the Garuda post (ध्वजस्तम्भ) and smiled.

The Swamiji:- Lo! whence did you come?

The Chandala:- Yes my master! This is my fate. I heard your arrival and came to see you. As before help me out of this difficulty.

The Swamiji:- "Alright. Do some service to God tomorrow". He went away much ~~satisfied~~. Next day he brought a handful of mustard seeds and placed it at a respectable distance and with a low obeisance he prayed he should be lifted up. That was Ashadha and the Swamiji had a vow not to use mustard; still because it was offered with sincerity and devotion and because it was sacrificial grain the Swamiji ordered that the mustard seeds should be used for preparation of meals for that day. After the meals were over, some left over was given to the chandala who in all humility accepted it and ate it up. Then with the names of Shri Hari on his lips left the mortal coil and reached his destination. Formerly he was Kanaka born of [Yamamsha] at the time of Vyasaraja and now he had come to see the Swamiji, his Vyasaraja's incarnation. After accepting prasada from him he was released from that birth.

His vow of *Chaturmasya* continued there. Daily a big group of devotees came to him and being much pleased with his sight they used to return. A contemporary writer, Srinivasacharya Bidarahalli, came to the Swamiji. His brother

was Shri Yadavarya, who was also a writer. At the behest of his elder brother, Srinivasacharya had come there to be blessed by the Swamiji. So he fell prostrate before the Swamiji and begged for blessings. And he felt sure that he would be purified by the desire of the Swamiji that Srinivasacharya should leave Swamiji after taking the holy water Tirtha and Prasada, So Srinivasacharya stayed there. In the meals, preparations mixed with mustard were served to him. It was his vow not to touch mustard in the month of Ashada according to the custom of the disciples of Uttaradi Math. He did not know what to do. The Swamiji understood this and had other preparations without mustard seeds which were also served to him. After meals Srinivasacharya took leave of the Swamiji accepting coloured rice [Mantrakshata] as a sign of parting blessings. He was very glad to see that he was recognised and respected. He reached his place and bowed down to his elder brother. Yadavarya read on the face of Srinivasacharya sin arising from offending his superiors.

He said:- "What is the matter? Why are you so pale? was Swamiji not pleased to bless you? He is endowed with intuitive insight and thus stands high among the blessed. If he is not pleased it is not possible to please also Shri Madhva our common Guru".

Shri:- No, he blessed me beyond my expectation.

Yad:- Alright, I did not understand this, Let me see the parting blessing of coloured rice. I shall have them on my head.

Shrinivasacharya opened the rice and they were all turned to black. "Just see here! You have offended him grievously. So instead of blessings you have a curse. Let

me know what happened”.

Shrinivasacharya was narrating all that had happened and while doing so he told that he did not accept mustard seeds mixed in the food.

Yad:- Ah! Just it is! It is a grievous offence. What is the use of your arrogance before men of divine wisdom. Do you know better than the Swamiji as to what is acceptable? Never you should discard that which is offered to Shri Mula Rama and to the great ascetics. May you not suffer through out your life! Go first and approach the Swamiji in all humble supplication and get his blessings.

Srinivasacharya was greatly distressed. He planned one thing and that turned out to be another. So he gave up his meals and with hungry stomach and penitent mind approached Swamiji and fell at his feet.

The Swamiji gently asked:- “Did you long to see the Mula Rama again?” and smiled.

Shri:- How can a sinful man like me have Darshan? Kindly forgive my offence and be pleased to bless me. This is unintended offence. Still it is a great offence. Now you alone can save me.

Swamiji:- You need not be anxious, get up it does not matter. There is nothing wrong in what you have done. You have followed the custom of your Math and that is but just. Perhaps it is Mula Rama who got angry with you for not having taken his prasad. Now to-day you just take his Prasad and there ends the matter.

Shri:- Your order, Sir!!

That day he partook of the meals prepared according to

the custom of the Math, got blessings from the Swamiji and went to his own place.

To those who are troubled with knotty problems in life, and wish to clear their path from such hindrances by close thinking, the example of Srinivasacharya is highly enlightening. Though the path is settled along which we must tread, we shall have to adjust ourselves to time, place, context and the high presence of personages. Indians have this characteristic of learning the lessons of flexibility and adjustment. Dharmaraja was a literal follower of the rules of Dharma. But it was the opinion of Bheema that those rules must be tempered with discrimination. As always Dharmaraj had his say in all matters, Droupadi had to suffer humiliation and molestation at the hands of the Kauravas, and Pandavas had to retire into the forest. In the present instance Shrinivasacharya persisted that his view was right in the divine presence of high personages and he had to suffer. Nowadays people have taken to the ways of self-conceit as a result of ignorance. They stick to their petty rules at any cost in time and out of time. Even in the presence of great persons of religious merit and pure understanding these petty people indulge in self-asserting ways of insisting on their priority and privilege in offering Naivedya Arti and in having the holy water served to them first. These arrogant and conceited ways have no spiritual bearing but they indicate intellectual and spiritual down-fall. Such persons should learn a lesson from the conduct of Yadavarya and Shrinivasacharya.

The Swamiji completed his vow of *Chaturmasya* and continued his tour. Nearby there was a place called Kandinati and there lived an orphan boy called Venkanna who approached the Swamiji and prostrated before him and prayed suppliantly that he had none to look after him and

he should be blessed with help. Though he had learnt to read and write while quite young still his guardians did not treat him properly; So he had now been a cowherd and was tending. He showed great devotion to elders and teachers. Still he had not learnt Vedic hymns or prayerful psalms. Seeing this dejected soul the Swamiji's heart melted with pity. He read in him signs and characteristic of officer exercising authority. The Swamiji gave him blessings with coloured rice - "God wants to push you up. Remember us in times of difficulty. You will be easily out of wood. Thus he blessed, and Venkanna was much pleased.

At that time, the present Adavani was a feudatory state subordinate to Bijapur Sultan. Siddi Masud Khan was then feudatory prince. Though he was subordinate to Bijapur Sultan still independently he was extending his kingdom. Raichur district was under his rule. Masud Khan came to Venkanna's Village to collect land revenue. Loot and dacoities were the order of the day. So none came to see the Khan. When the Khan was going in procession in the village the Khan received a letter. According to the ways of those days, the Khan called Venkanna who was standing near by to read the letter. Venkanna was not an expert in reading; so it was now a problem to him. Even if he did not agree to read he was not out of danger. As per order of the Khan he rode up the elephant. The Nawab gave the letter into his hands. Venkanna through fear profusely perspired. His voice sank. He was trembling from head to foot and said..... "No, Sir, I cannot read." Thus he humbly prayed. But it was in vain. Nawab in a stern voice said; "Heretic! Being a brahmin you do not know reading? Read! and, you will get a reward; if not, you cannot save your life." Thus he thundered. Venkanna was still trembling. He

was at his wit's end. Some how he remembered the words of the Swamiji He said in his mind" I am in real danger. You should save me Oh! Sri Raghavendra" Thus he prayed in his mind and began to read the letter. As his good luck would have it, the letter carried the news of great success to the Navab. He nodded his head in appreciation of Venkanna's way of reading and his sonorous voice. He found that Venkanna was a man of good understanding and through fear he was trembling. By the blessings of his Guru Venkanna gathered up extra-ordinary courage; He then explained to the Navab what he should do in a convincing manner. Navab when he heard his explanation was greatly delighted. "You just be our private secretary and help me in the administration of Adoni." Look to the ways of fortune. A cowherd became a counsellor to the Navab.

Just to help him to get redemption the Guru also helped Venkanna to the full extent. When he took up the reins of administration into his hands, he felt he was quite accustomed to that work since a long time. He was doing the work very efficiently. Gradually he won the good opinion of the Navab. Venkanna became the veritable ruler. But he never forgot his Guru. He was anxiously waiting for an opportunity to see the Swamiji personally and to tell him the fruit of his blessings.

The Swamiji leaving the place of Venkanna, blessing him heartily, in the course of touring came to Shrishaila and worshipping god Rudra, came to Tirupathi, the family and his favourite deity. He stayed there for sometime, worshipped Shri Venkatesh and then proceeded to Kanchi.

There he visited Varadaraj and Kamakshi and went to Arunachala. After seeing Arunachleswar he went to Vriddhachala and then to Shrimushna. The last named one is a great place of pilgrimage being counted as one of the few places where God has shown himself (Swayamvyakta). Shri Madhva had gone to that place and seen Varahamurti. He struck a pond by his Danda which is now called Danda Teertha. Even now Hanuman in three forms is worshipped by the Shri Vaishnavas. So this is a place of which the Madhvas are very proud. There the Swamiji visited Varaha Murti and prayed to him. Thus he had a round in the south and wherever he went he hoisted the triumphal flag of his great success. After a long absence he went to his place, Kumbhakonam. The people of chola Mandala were grateful to him as he had saved them from a great catastrophe. People were earnestly and eagerly awaiting him. When they knew that the Swamiji was entering the city the people decorated the city to welcome him with the mela of Sahnai and with a full-pot (पूर्णकुम्भ) The temples of Sarangapani and Kumbheswar also had sent their Paraphernalia of honour to that place. Elephants and horses formed the front part of the procession. When the Swamiji came the horses and the elephants in their own way showed him the respect. The Brahmins chanted Vedic hymns. People lustily cheered him. A shower of flowers was poured over the Swamiji. Just as Shri Rama after his stay in the forest, came to Ayodhya and entered the city along with Bharata so also the Swamiji entered the city with royal pomp. In every street triumphal arches were erected and flowers were showered on him while the sweet music of the instruments filled the air. Young damsels did Arati before every house. The Swamiji thought all this honour and pomp was due to Shri Hari's

grace and entered his Math by the eastern gate.

After coming to Kumbhakonam the Swamiji studied minutely the situation of Kumbhakonam. He found the place unsuited to his activities. Besides he had much work to do. He found Chola Mandala was not a suitable place for him. Therefore he thought of leaving Kumbhakonam for good. Then the Swamiji had not yet finished his commentary on the Vedas. In order to complete this work he had to leave this place. Now the Swamiji worshipped his Guru's Guru, Shri Vijayeendra Swami and appointed his own men for daily worship and appointed another his own man to look after the administration of the Math, with a view to depart from that place. From the time of Shri Vijayeendra Swami the administration of all the temples at Kumbhakonam belonged to the Shri Math. Now the Swamiji transferred the supervision of Chakrapani and Sarangapani temples to Ahobal Math and that of Kumbheswar was handed over to Kanchi Kamakoti Math. All this was a bolt from the blue to the people who were shocked and prayed to the Swamiji to stay there only. The Swamiji convinced all of them with reason based on commonsense point of view; and left Kumbhakonam on an auspicious day. Now the journey was not as slow as before. By swift marches and campings he came to Karnataka and reached Hospet; then he visited *Nava Vrindavanam* where he saw the Vrindavanam of his own Guru and also of Chandrikacharya. He offered *Has-todaka* there to both of them, came to Hampi and saw Shri Raghunandana Teertha and Shri Narahari Teertha and went towards Adavani (Adoni).

At Adoni Siddhi Masud Khan was the Navab. Venkan-na was his divan. When he heard the news of Swamiji's coming, his heart was filled with joy, for he thought he got

an opportunity to render grateful service to the Swamiji. Whenever he had an opportunity to talk with the Navab he used to tell the greatness of the Swamiji. The Navab heard from him that the Badshaha of Bijapur had given him the title of *Jagadguru*. and the white umbrella (श्वेतछत्रम्) in recognition of his great merits and became eager to see such a person and thought that if possible he should put him to severe test.

Now the Navab offered Venkanna to accord the Swamiji a befitting welcome, when he heard from Venkanna that the Swamiji was entering the city. The energy of Venkanna was now doubled as he got the order of the Navab in addition to his own eagerness in the matter. So he took personal interest in the decoration of the city. The arrangements for decoration were complete. There was joy everywhere among the people hearing the news of the Swamiji's coming.

When Swamiji reached the out-skirts of the city, the citizens and officers were found waiting for his reception. So the Swamiji stopped and first among the officers Venkanna came and prostrated himself before the Swamiji. As he saw his beloved Guruji after many days Venkanna's heart was filled with gratitude and devotion. Just as Bharata's heart surged up with emotion at the sight of Shri Ramachandra after a long separation, his throat was choked and he could not speak. He did not rise up though much time had elapsed. The Swamiji himself raised him and passed gently his hands on the back and said.... "What Dewanji! How do you do? How is the Navab doing?"

V- By your blessings everything is good.

S- We are very glad to see you in a high position.

V.- It is not my merit, Guruji, but it is all your grace. If you talk like this how shall I find my way of spiritual uplift. I am sure to fall down.

S.- No, you are still to do much service and unique service to God.

V.- All belongs to the Swamiji. I am destined to get only the benefit of rendering such services.

S.- Let it be! Let us talk afterwards. Now it is time.

Venkanna seated the Swamiji in a golden Palanquin and the procession went in the streets of the city. Suitable building had also been arranged where the Swamiji stayed. He himself offered Bhiksha that day at his cost. He had made elaborate preparations so that the Swamiji should not feel anything wanting for it was he who had lifted him up into divine light from utter darkness. The Swamiji very much appreciated his unflinching faith, sincere devotion and his noble liberality.

Next day the Navab informed Venkanna that he desired to give courtesy call to the Swamiji. Venkanna was glad to know this and made necessary arrangements. The Navab was waiting for an opportunity to test the merits of the Swamiji that was reported to be matchless by the people. Now he found a good opportunity. Purposely in a silver plate he kept things prepared of mutton and having covered it with a fine cloth placed it before the Swamiji. He kept himself at a respectful distance saluting the Swamiji in the muslim style. The Swamiji was seated in a raised seat. Swamiji asked him to sit down. He occupied the seat that was specially kept for him. With a smile on his face Swamiji began with the formal question of his welfare and of his

subjects. The Navab who was very much impressed with the unique personality of the Swamiji was galvanized into the most exciting surprise to hear his silver voice. He was provoked to think that the Swamiji had the capacity and courage to command the whole world. The divine lustre radiating from his body dazzled his human eyes and he regretted for having embarked on a perilous task of testing such a glorious character. But now it was too late to retrace his steps. The Swamiji was glad to find an occasion to impress a Mlencha with the efficacy of religious practices of Hindu Religion. Venkanna Pant was quite innocent of all this. He thought that the Navab had brought precious gifts to offer to the Swamiji. The Swamiji called his servant and asked him to bring water which he sprinkled on the plate and asked the servant to open the cover of the plate saying that the Navab had brought things to offer to God.

Now the Navab's heart beat rapidly. He opened the mouth to say 'No' to the servant; but he faltered. He hung down his face in shame. Just by this time the servant had removed the cover. The plate was filled with fruits and flowers. The Navab was amazed at the revelation and stood aghast struck with terror and surprise and supplication. simultaneously. He stood up, came near the Swamiji and begged to be forgiven.

Shri- You have done nothing wrong.

Navab-No sire, kindly forgive my fault.

Shri-Do not take it seriously! God is pleased with you. We expect some service from you. Our Chief Guru also blessed a Navab like you. Our Guru blessed the king of Bijapur fully. We were highly respected and honoured by the Adilsha of Bijapur. You have sincere faith in us. You

put us to test in order to know the value of our religion and God dances before us: only we must follow this religion.

Navab-Please forgive my excesses. Now to-day may God be worshipped at my cost.

Shri-Let it be so. We are very glad.

The Navab went home and sent things and money for that day's puja. That day also Venkanna himself supervised the arrangements. After all the programmes were over, the Navab called Venkanna aside and said to him...."I mean to make a permanent gift to your Swamiji. So I wish to grant a good village under my administration. What is your opinion. Consult your Swamiji also in this matter".

Venkanna said he would gladly consult the Swamiji and let him know the result.

Venkanna Pant made known the inner desire of the Navab and the Swamiji was very glad to know that he had also entertained the same thought and he thanked God who facilitated the fulfilment of his desire so suddenly.

Swamiji-Venkanna! We are very glad, let us have the village Mantralaya on the river Tungabhadra. We shall be more pleased to have that gift.

Venkanna-Why so sir! it is not a fertile village, it is a barren place. Thinking it to be useless the Navab has given it to a Kaji.

Shri-Does not matter. Let us have that village only. For this reason only. We left the place of our Guru and came over here. There is a strong reason for insisting on having this village. We shall let you know it afterwards. Moreover

the village deity is our favourite deity. Besides in what way the Sanyasies are connected with the produce of the village. We are satisfied if we get a suitable place for our residence. We need a place that is on the bank of a river. Venkanna, did not you know that residence on the bank of a river is not a negligible factor for religious minded people. We are especially fond of such a place. Just see! Shri Vyasarja is standing in the midst of the same river. Accordingly we also wish to reside near this river. Our Guru also has chosen a place on the islands made by this river. Therefore we shall be highly pleased to have that village for our residence.

“As you order” saying thus Venkanna went to the Navab and informed him of what the Swamiji had desired to have.

The Navab first asked Venkanna why the Swamiji was insisting on having such a wretched place as Mantralaya; but Venkanna explained to him the relevant reasons for the demand of the Swamiji and then the Navab asked the Kaji to Vacate Mantralaya and in its place have two villages [Wogarur and Timmapur] Mantralaya was assigned to the Swamiji. Venkanna himself performed the donation ceremony according to rites and deeds were also written and registered.

ENTRANCE INTO BRINDAVAN

Shri Raghavendra Swami entered Mantralaya on an auspicious day. In the village he erected a Venkatesha Mandir; for Venkatesha was his family deity: and stayed there. Venkanna Pant every now and then came to the Swamiji and tried to know how the Swamiji was doing. Once when

Venkanna Pant had been there he took him to the bank and asked him to dig the place where now the *Brindavan* is situated. There was a sacrificial altar found. Venkanna asked the Swamiji what that was.

The Swamiji said in reply...“This is what we had promised to tell you afterwards. Though barren this is a place with holy associations. So you have earned a lot of religious merit by getting this place for us. In the Krita Age Shri Prahlad performed a sacrifice here. Shri Mantralayambike was his tutelary deity of his family. This must be the place of our activity. We have also some mission to accomplish like Prahlad. Now we hope you have followed us why we forced you to get this place for us.”

“Besides this in the Dwapara age while the Pandavas performed the *Ashva medha* sacrifice and were having a victorious march all over India, there was a battle fought between Anu Salva and Arjuna in this very place. As Anu Salve's chariot was standing on this sacrificial ground it was very difficult for Arjuna to defeat him. Then at the suggestion of Bhagavan Shri Krishna, Arjuna retraced a few steps and Anu Salva's chariot left the sacrificial ground and came forward; and he was easily defeated. Therefore those who stand here will never sustain a defeat, and this is an eternal truth.”

Venkanna was overpowered by emotion and said in choking voice....“Now I understand and I am convinced that you are a great soul by every one of your acts. I am now finding every day a new phase of your greatness. I only wish to be blessed. Blessed I am that I have got such a spiritual guide.” He prayed earnestly that he should be helped in his spiritual course of progress.

By the orders of the Swamiji, Venkanna Pant in the

place of that sacrificial altar built an inner shrine around which a spacious compound wall was raised, which touched the Mandir of Shri Mantralayambike. He was simply waiting for the words of the Swamiji, being very eager to execute that order in actual action. But his heart was a bit depressed and was heavy with sorrow when it struck him that the Swamiji would soon end his worldly sojourn. He was very much distressed that he would soon lose the pleasure of his guidance and company. Still he had not the courage to question him regarding this delicate subject.

The month of Ashadha of Virodhikrit Samvat was fast approaching. The Swamiji observed the vow of *Chatrumasya* at mantralaya only. Ashadha passed and Shravan set in. On the first friday it was Varamahalaxmi day and the Swamiji had a special worship accorded to Mantralayambike offered Naivedya and Arati, and prayed Durga in that form in great devotion.

“A bow to you, Oh giver of gifts! Krishne! you are unmarried observing the vow of celebacy. Your body shines like the morning sun, having your face as delighting as the full orb of the moon. You are as bright as Laxmi the fiance of Shri Narayana. You wanderer in the sky! Your vow of celebacy is clear in your nature. Taking the vow of celebacy you have purified the heaven. Therefore, Oh! Goddess; you have been praised and even worshipped by the Gods. Oh the killer of Mahishasur! for the protection of the three worlds! Oh the best of the Gods! be pleased with me and show pity on me and be good to me. Who bows down to you in the morning will find nothing difficult to obtain. You are called Durga by the wise, because you save others from durga or difficulties. Oh you Durga! You are fame, courage, success, honour, -knowledge. Progeny, intellect,

twilight, night, morning, sleep, moonlight, light self-control: mercy to him who bows to you. Oh the mistress of the Gods! Protect me Oh! you, having eyes like lotus petals! be true to me. Oh you resort of all and dear to the devotees! Oh Durga! Be helpful to me."

Thus when he prayed to the Goddess Durga she was pleased to present herself before the Swamiji and said..."Oh son! I am pleased with your prayer; when Narayana himself had come out of the column to protect you it is but natural that I should also bless you. Fortunately, I was the family deity and you worshipped me. Now also adopt me as your family deity and worship me. I shall be always at your back guarding you from all dangers. Now, in future, when religion loses its strength and influence I have been ordered by Hari to descend to the earth for the resuscitation of the religion till then people like you shall have to bear the burden of that task. So our work is common and our aim is one and the same. As you have the full support of Vayu Deva you will do some extraordinary work. I shall be here only and doing work through your medium. You just keep goat's heads which are my emblems near the front door, to face you. It acts against all evil forces even of diabolical nature. I do not expect any thing more from you". Thus saying and assuring him all help she vanished.

The Swamiji, sent on this mission by Hari. Being Prah-lad himself, realising that he had the backing up of Goddess Durga in his undertaking was much gratified. After all everything is being done by the wise dispensation of Hari, he mused and brought back to his mind his beloved form of Hari and kept quiet.

He had firmly resolved that he should terminate his life here on a fixed day. None could change it. Venkanna in

course of talk one day opened the topic. But the Swamiji waived the topic only by saying that everything went on by the orders of Hari; and ordered Venkanna to keep everything ready. "As you command" he said and with great grief he was busy in making arrangements.

It was Thursday, the full moon day in the month of Jestha in Soumya Samvatsar. The Swamiji was explaining to the disciples the greatness of Hari, his extraordinary power and his attachment and affection for his devotees. Suddenly he looked at the sky, with wonder and consternation. The disciples could not understand why the Swamiji was engaged in looking at the sky and one among them asked that question. "Oh you Guru! What made you look at the sky in confusion". The Swamiji looking to the curiosity of the disciples, smiled and said..."Oh! Krishna Dwaipayana is leaving this world and riding a plane, is proceeding to the next, we saw that". The disciples saw that he was gifted with the divine sight and could see distant things visibly.

After some days he chose a good day; he called one of his disciples who was the grand son of his elder brother Gururajacharya in his former stage of life (पूर्वजन्म) He was detached and disinterested; his name was Venkannacharya. Now the Swamiji gave holy orders to him and called him "*Sri Yogeendra Teertha*". He had initiation into all Mantras and all arts. ~~he ordered Venkanna Pant to treat this new Swamijee as he had treated him so long. Venkanna Pant~~ just considered the case from the practical point of view and documents were prepared in the name of *Yogeendara Teertha* for the transfer of Mantralaya village.

As per desire of the Swamiji Venkanna built a Brindavan quite charming to look at. "This is not for us. Keep this for some future Swamiji, bring us another stone." Thus

he ordered. And Venkanna asked what the matter was. The Swamiji replied that there was a stone near Madhavar which was purified and rendered holy by the touch of Shri Ramachandra; and he desired that stone must be brought.

As per desire of the Swamiji Venkanna Pant got the stone. And parts of Brindavan were accordingly chiselled. And from out of the same stone the figure of Shri Pranadeva was cut out.

As the time approached for the Swamiji to enter the Brindavana, the people round about Mantralaya were subjected to most painful excitement. There was no end to the grief of Venkanna. Devotees round about the place hearing this news came in a great number and saw the Swamiji and returned with a heavy heart. Now the Swamiji declared openly that he was going to enter Brindavana on the second day of the dark half of Shravan. How was this possible? What was the miracle? They could not understand. Every body's curiosity was excited. But none had the courage to express it.

Anyhow the first day of the dark half for Shravana of the year *Virodhikrit* passed away. On the second day morning the Swamiji finished his morning religious rites and seating himself on his Asana called all his disciples and said to them-,

“Oh my favourite disciples! This is our last day. It seems you are all much grieved over this. But you need not be anxious over this. We are not going to part with our body. It is the order of Shri Hari that we should stay in this world to safeguard the interests of our faith. But we cannot stay bodily outside beyond a certain limit as that would go against the rules of the present age. Therefore we are going to enter the Brindavana bodily. So the Brindavan

is erected. To the last be faithful and loyal to your God and religion. May God Bless you with all things good". Thus he advised them.

Venkanna Panth was called and he was asked to collect twelve hundred *Saligrams*, which he most willingly did. That day there was arrangement for worship with special grandeur and pomp. The Swamiji went through all the rituals with unusual interest and devotion.

It was now mid-day. The day's worship was over. Teertha was distributed and he blessed them all with parting coloured rice (मन्त्राक्षता). He talked with some and enquired into their private affairs, to some he gave parting message and he called Venkanna and blessed him with full grace and told him..."Our time has come. We shall sit in the posture of yoga with meditative signs; and place the stones of Brindavan around us as we have directed you. When you reach as far as our head keep all the twelve hundred *Saligram's* on our head and close it with the lid and then place some earth". This was his pious parting word.

In the afternoon the Swamiji, when the time was very auspicious, sat in a Yogic posture and controlling his breath meditated as to how the controlling deities of different senses enter into their superiors, and then concentrating on Venugopal Krishna in the caverns of the heart attained Samadhi, in which his mind severed all connection with the outside world. The pipes were blowing and drums were being beaten. The Brahmins were reciting the Vedas, reading the Shastras. The Haridas were narrating the wonderful deeds of Shri Hari. Venkanna and others were supervising these activities. All eyes shed tears of joy and grief simultaneously. All praised the Swamiji with their throats choked with tears.

At the desire of the Swamiji stones were raised round his body as he sat in Yogasana. The Saligram stones were then kept and the lid was slipped into the right place. Thus the Swamiji entered the Brindavan bodily.

As per his desire that very day was observed as Maha Samardhana Day, Many Brahmins were feasted and Shri Yogendra Teertha gave Dakshina to all. He composed the last verse on

दुर्वादिघ्नांत रवये वैष्णवेन्दीवरेन्दवे ।
श्रीराघवेन्द्रगुरुवे नमोत्यन्त दयालवे ॥

his Guru "A bow to Guru Raghavendra who is the sun to dispel the darkness of bad systems of philosophy, who is the moon to the night lotuses of Vishnu Bhaktas and who is extremely kind to all." In front of the Brindavan he erected the idol of Shri Hanuman. The last day of the Aradhana was performed in all glory and pomp befitting the occasion.

THE MIRACLES ASSOCIATED WITH THE BRINDAVANA

Great wonders were exhibited in the Brindavan from the day of its first worship. And that tradition even now continues unabated. The worship and prayers are being accorded in greater number every day. No one can understand the unfathomable depth of the greatness of the Swamiji.

The miraculous wonders wrought by the Swamiji to bless ordinary persons like us if collected together will become a huge volume of religious efficacy. It is not possible to detail all these in this small book. Only one or two incidents will be narrated here.

Among the many disciples of the Swamiji, Appan-

nacharya is the most pious and highly devoted person. His place was Bhiksalaya. (Bichale) That place is on the other side of the Tungabhadra at a distance of five or six miles from Mantralaya. When the Swamiji entered the Brindavana the river was in high floods; so he could not reach Mantralaya in time and have the last sight of his Guru. But as he left his place he was praising his Guru all the while. That panegyric begins like this in Sanskrit. "The ocean in the form of words from the lips of Shri Madhvacharya" श्री पूर्णबोध गरुतीर्थ पयोध्विपारा. This is a highly inspired eulogy. गुरुस्तेत्रम् There is no scope for any exaggeration or flattery in a poem which wells up from the heart surging with emotion. He was reciting it so easily that it seemed as if he had committed it to memory. As he reached the first gate of Brindavan the last verse was being recited, यो भक्त्या गुरु राघवेन्द्र but he stopped being short of seven syllables to complete the panegyric. As the Swamiji had already informed long ago the day of entrance, he now felt sure that he would not have the sight of the mortal cover of his Guru. So he was greatly grieved and his prayer was tinged with the sorrow of the excruciating pain of separation. Though had not seen the Brindavan, he was all the while describing the power and greatness of this Brindvan. But when he actually stood in front of the stone Brindavan which had, inside, the body frame of the Guru his grief knew no bounds. the throat was choked with tears, and the panegyric stopped unfinished as above. He prostrated and stood up before the Brindavan in a dejected mood.

The hymn of prayer had reached so far....."He, who unfailingly resorts to the feet of the Guru, who recites this prayer every day, will never meet with sorrow and darkness and moreover he will get there by all his desired objects,

fame and unlimited wealth and will get at last Mukti by the grace of Shri Hari”.

Thus far the poem had been composed. Appannacharya lost all consciousness as he stood before the Brindavan. But that unfinished sentence short of seven syllables was completed by the Guru present in the Brindavan thus सक्ति ह्यास्योत्र हि in seven syllables. The meaning is“All that is described here is true and the truth is born out by *Hayavadana*, and he stands eternal witness to this”. Perhaps the Guru was chanting the *Hayagreeva* Mantra then.

Appannacharya hearing these words coming from the Brindavana, was amazed. His body trembled and hair stood on end on his body. Tears of joy were flowing incessantly. He was elated with joy to know that his Guru gave his assent and recognition to whatever an ordinary man like him said in the whole of the poem of eulogy. He was wrong in being sorry for not seeing the Guru. For he said he was ever present in the Brindavan. Only the power to see him differed with different persons. “Let it be so”! I heard the divine voice of my Guru! that is enough! I am really blessed.” Thus he consoled himself.

By the Blessings of Shri Gururaja this *Stotra* composed by Appannacharya has become the most popular of all *Stotras* composed by others on him. Even to-day there is hardly a devotee of Sri Raghavendra who does not recite this *Stotra* by heart. Every letter in this *Stotra* is charged with the gracious blessings of Shri Raghavendra; and thus has become immortal. The fulfilment that is assured in this *Stotra* is realised even to-day.

Along with this *Stotra* Appannacharya composed a poem of eight verses describing the greatness of Shri

Gururaja. These two are recited everyday in the evening near the Brindavan at Mantralaya.

SHRI VADEENDRA TEERTHA

In about the middle of the eighteenth century Sri Vadeendra Teertha, the fifth after Sri Gururaj, became the pontifical head. He is the author of many work. One of these is the famous work "Guru Guna Stavana" which describes the works of Shri Gururaj, praising their merit. It is a very small work of thirty six verses; still it is a good piece of poetry. The author shows very interesting reasons for writing every work. Besides he gives a Chronological order of the works and mentions some works of Shri Gururaj which are not at all found.

He dedicated this work to Shri Gururaj and it is said that the Brindavan itself nodded its head in appreciation of this work; and this amazed all the devotees that were present.

SHRI VIJAYADAS

Shri Vijayadas belongs to a later period than that of Vedeendra. He was crushed under the cruel heels of wretched poverty and was begging most entreatingly for every meal, still he was not an ordinary man. His life history reveals that he was gifted with divine visions and that he was *Bhrigu Rishi* himself in spiritual history. When he was recognised as a great Dasa or servant of God he fed many hundreds of families of Brahmins every day.

He was a contemporary of Shri Vasudhendra Teertha. He has a great place in Dasa literature after Purandara Das. The Dasa tradition was almost completely lost and the credit of reviving it goes to Shri Vijaya das. This great work he

did getting his inspiration from Shri Gururaja. Vijayadas was directed at Kashi by Shri Purandara Das, his guru, through dreams with the suggestion of a sign-name to come at the end of the song composed by him.

Then he came to Adoni. He then proceeded to Mantralaya to visit the Vrindavana before which he stood and immediately began to sing a song composed extempore.

"I saw Guru Raghavendra and bowed down submissively to him. I praised him lavishly: and begged boons from him who shines without a compere. First Prahlada arranged a sacrifice on the bank of this river and completed that and passed away. He understood that inwardly and instantly with a pure heart attached to the company of the good contemplated the feet of the abode of Laxmi (Narayan) knowing and realising his greatness. He shines like the rising sun. (1) Shri Madhva and other Gurus live in their integral parts here in Brindavan realising the merits of Madhava through meditation. They try to know them and initiate others into them, following the path of getting direction from persons in higher rank; thus in Kali Age they always dispel the darkness. (2) He without fail praises the lotus like feet of Rama Narahari and Krishna. Though quite delicate in body he proves to be a thunderbolt to the hard mountain of disputants of the opposite Camp. This ascetic every hour showers boons over all. (3) For seven hundred years he would be constantly residing in Brindavan and the ceremonies of *Aradhana* Mahotsava would go on increasing year by year and week by week, the Lord of Lakshmi assuming the form of missiles would remove the sins of those who praise him and thus increase the fame of Shri Gururaj week by week. (4) There will be no limit to anything here. For everything goes on redounding to the fame of Shri

Gururaj; the feeding of the Brahmins, story telling of Shri Hari as in Mahabharat. So that there will be no other place that could rival Mantralaya on the face of this earth. Thus Shri Gururaj would be shining on all grandeur as he goes on praising *Sree Vijaya Vithal* who gives a helping hand to the downtrodden and helpless."

This song reveals some wonderful points that raise Shri Gururaj to the rank of the best of Bhagavatas which the lay-man had missed to notice. One is Gururaj is Shri Prah-lad himself who it is clearly seen, formerly had performed the sacrifice there. More than all these all Gurus right from Shri Madhva to his own Guru Shri Purandar, were seen by Shri Vijayadas in the Brindavan when he stood there before it. He saw there actually those lower in the rank were receiving instructions from those who are higher in rank. Shri Hari, in his four forms Rama, Narahari. Vedavysa and Krishna, was guarding the sides of the Brindavan and was thus exhibiting his special power and favour. Laxminarayan was in the from of Chakra or missile to bless devotees with boons and gifts. For seven hundred years miracles and wonders and other deeds of spiritual significance would be attributed to this Brindavan and its greatness would be increasing day by day and then for a long time they stand steadily enjoying wide fame and popularity. All this, Sri Vijaya Das, being endowed with intuitive visions could see with his inward eye all the future events as clearly as we see the present things. Thus Shri Vijayadas of wonderful wisdom saw extraordinary spiritual power and energy in the Brindavan and disclosed it to the world. We need not dilate on this to show that the spiritual efficacy of Brindavan was quite uncommon and peculiar.

SHRI JAGANNATHDAS

Jagannath Das occupies the same place in Dasa literature as Shri Gururaj occupies in Madhva philosophic literature. It is by the blessings of Shri Varadendra that Jagannath attained proficiency in four branches of Vedic lore. He was a poet of uncommon merit. He was in the latter part of the 18th century. Though his origin could be traced to heavenly spirits still he grievously offended Shri Vijayadas as a result of his *Karma* which now began to be atoned for; and so he suffered from stomach ache of a serious type. He served devotedly Shri Gururaj and got rid of it. By the blessings of Sri Pandurang he got to his poems his signname [Mudra-Ankita] *Jagannatha Vithal*. His Guru, Gopaldas, transferred from his own span of life a period of forty years to Jagannathadas, which he utilised to translate many original works into Kannada, and wrote many other original works on Topics of Madhva. His magnum opus was *Harikatham-ritasara*. Those who are well versed in tracing the great human beings to their divine origin would trace him to *Salhada*, the brother of Prahlad.

He was the most faithful and unfailing devotee of Shri Guru Raghavendra. He had kept up direct communion with Gururaj in the Brindavan. To him the stony Brindavan was a living spirit. He found it to be actual Gururaj with his holy stick and wooden pot of water, clad in red robes of the holy order, bearing vertical *namas*; and seeing such a body of divine effulgence he fell into ecstasy and sang in praise of him and danced with joy.

But this could not be kept a secret; against his will it was broadcast and so he lost that divine vision and Gururaj could no longer be seen in bodily form. Jagannathadas was

grievously distressed and he pitiously cried and earnestly prayed for that divine vision. Then by the grace of Gururaj he saw him only in dreams and not in wakeful hours.

SIR THOMAS MUNROE

Munroe was an officer of the Survey Settlement-East India Company- in the Madras Province. Mantralaya was an endowment Village granted as a gift for maintaining Nandadeepa and daily worship and the Company Officer issued an order to resume the endowment. Then the devotees put in an application to reconsider the order, (because the Head of Mutt was residing at Nanjangud, Head Quarters of the Mutt.) for it was a place of religious efficacy and they pleaded that they should not unnecessarily meddle with such arrangements.

Sir Munroe came to make enquiries about this resumption along with his Sirastedar and others. He was a religious man. So he removed his shoes out-side the compound of the Brindavan and took off his hat in his hand and stood before the Brindavan with due deference to the sanctity of the place. The saint Gururaj emerged bodily from that tomb and discussed the question with him and convinced him how the endowment was irrevocable, and gave him a handful of coloured rice मन्त्राक्षता and became invisible. Those who stood near him neither saw him nor heard their conversation. So no one understood the meaning of this. They wondered why Munroe was speaking alone. Then he went to his tent and quashed the proposal and used that handful of rice for his meals on that day.

This has been mentioned in Madras Review in its VIII Vol. pp 280; Madras District Gazetteers also record this. This happened in the first quarter of the nineteenth century.

Nothing more is required to know the greatness of the saint of Mantralaya than this incident in the case of a foreigner and one professing different religion who had been blessed with an actual sight of the Swamiji along with discussion on the important topic concerning the Jahageer. This incident is thus described in the Gazetteer.

Extract from

Madras Districts Gazetteers

By W. Francis Esq. I.C.S.,

Reprint 1916 by the Superintendent

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Chapater XV-Adoni Taluk-Page No.213.

Mantsala (Mantralaya) A Shrotriem village with a population of 1212 on the bank of the Thungabhadara in the extreme north of the Taluk. The village is widely known as containing the tomb of the Madhva Saint, Shri Raghavendra Swami. The annual festival in August connected with which is attended by a large number of pilgrims including even lingayats from Bombay, the Nizam's Dominion and even Mysore. The tomb itself is not of Architectural interest. The grant of the landed endowment attached to it is said in the Mackenzic MSS to have been made by Venkan-na Pant, the well known Diwan of Siddi Masaud Khan, Governer of Adoni from 1662-1687.

A quaint story of Sir Thomas Munroe is told about the place. The endowment being threatened with resumption, Munroe, it is said, came to make enquiries. After removing his boots and taking off his hat he approached the grave.

The saint thereupon emerged from his tomb and met him. They conversed together for some time regarding the resumption, but though the saint was visible and audible to Munroe who was himself, the people declared-semi divine, none of the others who were there could either see him or hear what he said. The discussion ended, Munroe returned to his tent and quashed the proposal to resume the endowment. Being offered some consecrated rice he accepted it and ordered it to be used in the preparation of his meals for that day.

Madras Review VIII, 280

Thus the ways of Gururaj are wonderful, innumerable and unfathomable. Even now in the presence of ordinary men like us wonderful miracles are wrought. Men without the sense of sight or hearing or smelling are endowed with these senses. When they worship with devotion the dumb turn out to be having the gift of the gab. Issueless parents are given issues. People approaching the saint for such gifts as riches and wisdom, get their desired objects. He exercises most obstinate evil spirits from devotees that wallow before him when being possessed by them. Incurable diseases like leprosy, epilepsy, tuberculosis are cured. These are things of daily routine. Though these are great wonders to us they are quite common occurrences there. When even in places where people worship and offer prayers to the photos, Brindavans, having the earth of the original Brindavan deposited in them, such wonders are seen, what must be the nature of miracles wrought in the original place, Mantralaya. You can get your desires fulfilled even by worshipping silver Brindavans with the earth of the original in it or even the photos of Shri Gururaj.

This need not be treated indifferently thinking it to be mere exaggeration or propaganda. There is scriptural evidence and testimony of great aspirants to these great and wonderful deeds done at Mantralaya. It is said "Vishnu can give Moksha and Vayu also can do so by his master's order." So it is clear Vayu has great powers and plays an important part in the great work of the release of chained souls in this world. Madhva in Tatparya Nirṇaya says Prahlād evinces great spiritual strength when Vayu enters in him and directs him." Therefore, Prahlād is said to be Vaishnava by birth. "He is an eternal devotee." The Shastras have decided that "there is no other greater than Prahlād in devotion to Vishnu, except Tatvic deities and Narada and others." Prahlād does more wonderful deeds than spirits of higher rank when guided by the presence of Vayu in him. So it is quite proper to say that the Vayu present in Gururaja Blesses us with final release (मुक्ति) because it is within the jurisdiction of Vayu to grant that blessing. So uncommon are the blessings and favours of Shri Gururaj which he, in endless clemency, showers upon his devotees.

Now it is opportune to discuss what Vijayadas saw directly in the Brindavan of Gururaj. When all the spiritual guides right from Shri Madhva to his personal Guru were found to be present in the Brindavan, naturally it is found that all deities in one form are present in that place.

In the spiritual history of great saints and deities it is known that God Vishnu when pleased resides in one form near his devotees like *Indra* and *Bali*. While that Paramatman is present here in five forms of the most auspicious presence removing the evils of his devotees and blessing them with desired objects and transferring this fame and benefaction to the credit of Gururaja, then there is nothing

surprising if all the deities are found to abide in one form in the Brindavan. It is the extraordinary presence of Vayu that has attracted all these holy presences in one place.

It is to the credit of Shri Gururaj to have maintained the tradition of coherent consistency in the system of Shri Madhva. There is another peculiar thing in this. The end of a work is more powerful in conveying the central idea than the beginning. If you apply the same rule to the life history of a person, Shri Gururaja's works are characterised by a speciality which is not found in the works of his previous births. So if the birth of Shri Chandrikacharya was wonderful, the invisibility at the end of Gururaja's life was still more wonderful.

This speciality is borne out even in the field of literature. Gururaja wrote commentaries for three Vedas, at the behest of Shri Madhva. Because Shri Madhva wrote his commentary on Rig Veda only for forty hymns and thus did the spade work for others to follow up. That onerous duty fell upon Shri Gururaj. This was not an easy task. he wrote *Mantrartha Manjari* helping the elucidation of Acharya's Rig Bhashya for forty hymns. Moreover he brought to great publicity *Rigarth Manjari* the work of his son Laxminarayanacharya.

The following are the works that are ascribed to Shri Gururaj:-

1-3 Veda Traya Vivriti

4 Mantrartha Manjari

5-9 Commentary of five Suktas like Purusha Sukta

10-19 Dashopanishad Khandartha

- 20 Geetārtha Sangraha
- 21 Prameya Deepika Vyākhyā
- 22 Geeta Tatparya Teeka Vivaranam
- 23 Tantra Deepika
- 24 Nyaya Muktaṭali
- 25 Tattva Manjari
- 26 Tattva Prakasika Bhava Deepa
- 27 Parimala
- 28-37 Dasa Prakarana Teeka Vyākhyā
- 38 Rama Charitrya Manjari
- 39 Krishna Charitrya Manjari
- 40 Tatparya Nirṇaya Bhava Sangraha
- 41 Vadavalee Vyākhyā
- 42 Chandrika Prakasha
- 43 Tarka Tandava Vyākhyā
- 44 Pramana Padhati Vyākhyā
- 45 Anu Madhva Vijaya Vyākhyā
- 46 Prataha Sankalpa Gadya
- 47 Bhatta Sangrha
- 48 Prameya Sangraha

The system of Dwaita propagated by Shri Madhva gathered its strength by its exposition by Teekacharya. The three works of Shri Chandrikacharya fed it fat. it was ex-

tensively elucidated by 104 works of Vijayeendra Teertha.

On every topic of Madhva philosophy many works were written to explain. People were also learned to understand all these things. Political situation contributed more than all things to such a high standard of education and culture.

But after Shri Vijayeendra and Sudheendra passed away Tanjore and Madhura lost their ascendancy and power. The King of Vijayanagar at Vellore was a nominal figure head. So there was great unrest among the people. Accordingly muslim states of Bijapur and Golkonda were increasing their harassing attacks on Hindu states. Within this period of trouble and unrest cultured tradition broke and its homogeneity was threatened.

Different branches of Shastras lost their warmth of search for truth and developed only learned discussions of petty differences and they exhibited their skill only in hair splitting nonsense.

At this critical juncture in the field of Shri Madhva's system of philosophy men of wisdom and philosophical acumen to lead the people into its unbroken traditional chain were needed.

Besides, just as it was possible to bring the vast Vedic literature within the compass of understanding of the enquiring students by the help of Shrouta, Grihya, Dharma and Meemamsa Sutras, as also a work of that type was a badly felt need.

The supply of such a need goes to the credit of Shri Gururaj. For he not only wrote elucidating gloss on all the

terse commentaries and original works, he also wrote independent works on Gita, Brahma Sutras and Upanishadas making their meaning clear and comprehensive. Though he had begun to write a gloss on Chandrika named Prakasha he stopped for some time for he feared that students might not follow his work if they did not know the gist of Brahma Sutras; so he wrote first Tantra Deepika and Nyaya Muktaivali and then finished his half finished work Prakash.

Even great pandits cannot fully understand the deep meaning of his works, then how can lay men like us follow them? Still a bird's eye view of his works reveals one characteristic of all his works. He has shown great skill in collating comprehensively in a brief space what has been put in detail in a large passage. In this art of precis writing there is none to equal him. It is so natural with him. So before he took holy orders, he wrote a commentary on Anu Madhva Vijaya of Narayana Panditacharya. He has shown how each verse carries a world of meaning in a nut shell. People who could epitomise briefly extensive passages were needed and so he became the Pontifical head to popularise the works of Shri Madhva. Shri Vadeendra described that Shri Madhva blessed him with this honour because he was pleased with the commentary on Anu Madhva Vijaya; and this is no exaggeration. On the other hand it is reasonable and proper.

Take for instance the Tantra Deepika of Shri Gururaja. In every Sutra it explains what words are to be added from the previous Sutra to read the present Sutra so as to have full meaning. The full purpose of each word is brought to light. The significance of the order of words in the Sutra and then the meaning of the whole Sutra are dealt with lucidly. It can be safely asserted that there is no other work

on Sutra literature which explains so clearly Sutra and its wording. Along with this he adds what Shri Madhva says in his Bhashya, the significance of the elucidation of Sudha and the statement in Chandrik. Thus every Sutra, in the flood light of explanations and elucidations looms large with a wealth of meaning and a world of significance. This is selected to illustrate his method of writing, and this is usually followed in all his works.

Shri Gururaja has helped us by writing works not only on the three sacred works, but also on Rig Veda and Tatparya Nirnaya, commentary on Anu Bhashya; he has brought out all the hidden meaning of the Sutras. so none was more competent and better qualified than Shri gururaja to write works of elucidation and epitomisation of important parts of sacred literature. Even in this he closely follows the path trodden by shri Madhva who writes briefly stuffing his sentences fully with rich meaning. Like Acharya he also writes independent works on Gita, Brahma Sutra and Upanishads. This is also a clear sign that he has been specially blessed by Vayudeva.

These summarisations brought the works of shri Madhva again into a suitable frame to facilitate the study by earnest aspirants, by helping them in comprehension and retention of what they have read.

Shri Gururaja as a commentator never writes redundantly. A sentence of the original is fully understood only with the help of his commentary. But what he has explained fully in one place or in one work he will not repeat that in another work. so his former works have greater details than his later works.

He never digresses to dabble in unnecessary comments or improper charges against the opponents. He never discus-

ses on points of which he himself doubtful nor does he let loose his doubts in his works. He would never repeat a thing once told; never strike a word once written. Thus writes Vadeendra about him and that shows his clear understanding and his scholarship.

His commentary on Rig-Veda is really an important work. The ritualistic interpretation of Sayan helped the performance of Sacrifices but it never went deep to know the real purport of Vedas. The hidden meaning of the Vedas which was handed down to us from father to son now remained completely hidden. What is the meaning of the Veda which is at the base of the Indian Culture was not now known to the people. This was an essential task.

Gururaja entertained the idea of writing a commentary on the Vedas from his early days. It was his youthful dream. Sudhcendra Teerth well warned him that this would remain a dream if he would not take holy orders. Now his prophecy came to be true. The commentary really revealed the real and hidden meaning of the Vedas. He successfully showed that every syllable of the Veda connotes the greatness and supremacy of Para Brahman. This was possible for he was specially blessed by Vayudeva.

His place in Kannada literature was as unique as it was in the Vedic literature. shripadaraj gave a great lift to Dasa Sahitya and Chandrikacharya instilled life breath into it. For he was one who encouraged the gems among the Dasas Purandara das, Kanakadas and Vadiraj. Dasa Sahitya almost reached the zenith of its growth in his time. But after him it has a set back. It almost fell to the lowest level and was on the point of extinction. Now Gururaj revived it. Though there is only one song to his name, still

it is guessed that he must have many. For this one song shows his command over the language and expression of his surging emotions and other poetic qualities of Bhakti School.

Whatever that may be as in his former Avatar of Vyasaraj, even in the present birth he was a perennial fountain to feed the tree of Dasa Sahitya. It was his influence which fertilised this literature in Vijayadas till at last the tree spread into many branches. The main source of inspiration is Gururaj. By the presence of Gururaj the atmosphere round about Raichur and Adoni was charged with new life and energy. The faithful devotees and the Bhagavatas found a sudden metamorphosis in their surroundings. So you find great Dasas being born in places near Mantralaya, like Chikalpari, Uthanur; Manvi Lingasugur, Adoni Modalkallu and others. He was in the centre radiating spiritual rays all round. The pontifical heads coming in the line of Gururaj like Vadeendra, Varadendra, Vyasatavajna indirectly helped the growth of Dasa Sahitya. Jagannatha Das occupies a high place in devotional songs. Thus at the inspiration of Gururaj the pent up energy of the great souls ran wild and the devotional literature was in high floods.

Thus Gururaj was the reviver of both Vedic and Dasa literature and gave new life to them. Really it is a very graphic picture that Vadeendra describes comparing the Madhva system with a tree which bore fruit ultimately in Gururaj.

He also had an important role in the political field. There was great unrest and anarchy in the south in those days. The remnants of muslim invasion of Vijayanagar were lingering at Vellore. The South that had enjoyed peace and order for the last four hundred years then lost peace as in the days of Malikkafur.

The Naiks of Tanjore who were so long very powerful had now lost all their influence. Vijaya Raghav Naik was almost sandwiched between his enemies. The Naiks of Madhura were now slowly getting weaker and weaker. Of all these states, the State of Mysore had some peace under the rule of Dodda Devaraj. The Condition of North Karnataka was more precarious, On one side there was the harassing trouble from the Adilshaw of Bijapur and on the other side the Navab of Golkond was threatening the neighbours with attacks and in between these two the petty Palegars of Savanur and Adavani were adding in their own way fuel to the fire. The Westerners were taking advantage of all these troubles and disturbances and were slowly encroaching. Thus people of the south were subjected to vexation and mortifications and the south was a veritable hornet's nest. At this critical time Shri Gururaj left Kumbbhakonam the place of his Guru and toured the whole of the south and led a campaign of peace and love.

Though he was endowed with a gift of a big estate by Dodda Devaraj at Mysore, Gururaj did not stay there to spend his last days. He chose his place at Mantralaya. You may surmise many reasons for this choice. The first reason was to restore peace and love by his spiritual influence to the North Karnataka which was the cock pit for the fighting powers. So he purposely chose a place which was under rule of Mlencha, Sidi Masud Khan. Formerly the centre of activity of Dasa movement was Pandarpur and now by the choice of Mantralaya as the place of residence by Gururaj the centre of *Dasa* movement became Mantralaya.

Moreover; Mantralaya was a strategic place for the growth of such devotional activities; because it was a place where the boundaries of Maharashtra, Andhra and Karnataka

met. Standing such a unique place Gururaj could wield his influence simultaneously in all these provinces. As a result of this, later Shri Varadendra could get access at Poona and Sri Bhuvanendra was established at Gadwali. Sujanendra went and reclaimed Mysore which was the place of his own fore-fathers. Thus Gururaj standing at the gate of Karnataka appears like the leading captain of a Karnataka army.

Shri Gururaj not only fed the sentiments and emotions of believers but he rendered easy the path way to God to all his devotees. The epoch of worshipping small Brindavanams with the earth of the originals was started by Gururaj; while worshipping, offering to Gururaj started with what is known as Hastodak, giving Bhiksha to an aseetic. Gururaj blessed not only those who worship him at Mantralaya but also those who worship Brindavanams established in different places of the country with the sacred earth of the original deposited in them, for he condescended to go over to all those places where devotees earnestly prayed to him. That is why the Dasa sang in praise of him as "he runs to the places where we call him". This is unique blessing of Shri Gururaj. By such condescension he could still raise the standard of Sanatan Dharma in the Kali Age, winning over the hearts of thousands who flock under his banner. The spread of Gururaja's influence over the modern people who are mad after western ideals and thoughts and that too through a lifeless thing like the mud of the original Brindavan, is a thing which cannot be solved by modern culture. It is a direct challenge to science, materialism and heresy; and in the dazzling light emanating from this divine saint, agnosticism, materialism and illusionist idealism cut very poor figures and beat an honourable retreat bending down their heads in shame. A fight against

these isms by writing books would have been an uphill task and propagation of religion very difficult. By his super human power this task was made easy. In this materialistic age superhuman influence and divine blessings stand unchallenged; and the banner of divinity and religion would be flying aloft in the sky.

There is none who not impressed with the miracles of Shri Gururaj. Even an officer like Munroe was forced to revise his opinion. Even Masudkhhan a Yavan, became his devotee. To day Scientists, Doctors, Socialists, Materialists, even against their doctrines bow down before this saint, for he shakes the very foundations of their principles. Thus Shri Gururaj basking in the sun shine of the blessings of Vayu, checks successfully the triumphant march of Kali. What he advised, when he was Prahlad to the children of the Daityas he has transformed into actions to suit the times of Kali. Hari has blessed specially and shows his power through the medium of Gururaj and yet gives all the credit to him.

Thus Gururaj's influence is working in several directions and none can deny it. Gururaja's service to the Madhvas, to Karnatak, to the south and even to the whole of India is unique. We can declare emphatically that Shri Gururaj has carved a niche in the temple of Indian literature-Religious Social, Moral, and political.

SRI GURU RAGHAVENDRA STOTRAM

श्रीपूर्णबोध गुरुतीर्थ पयोध्विपारा
 कामारिमाक्षविषमाक्ष शिरस्स्पृशंती
 पूर्वोत्तरामिततरंगचरत्सु हंसा
 देवालि सेवितपरांघ्रि पयोजलग्ना ॥ 1 ॥
 जीवेश भेदगुणपूर्ति जगत्सुसत्त्व
 नीचोच्च भावमुकनक्रगणैस्समेता
 दुर्वाद्यजापतिगिलैर्गुरु राघवेन्द्र -
 वाग्देवतासरिदमुं विमलीकरोतु ॥ 2 ॥

Shri Appannacharya desirous of composing a penegyrical poem on Shri Raghavendra, and with a view to finish it without much hindrance, prays the heavenly Ganges in the first benedictory verse, comparing the current of speech of Shri Gururaj to the river Ganges. Just as the Ganges meets the ocean with the moon rising up so also the current of speech of Gururaj meets with the ocean of the speech of Shri Madhvacharya. Just as the Ganges touches the head of Shiva who conquered Manmatha (cupid) so also the current of the speech of Gururaj is borne on the head of great men of wisdom who also have conquered desire and other enemies of man. The heavenly river is visited by Swans, in her northern and eastern waves; so also the verbal current of Gururaj is enjoyed by the Swan i.e. the Sanyasis who have very settled views in Vedanta by a critical study of Purva and Uttara Meemamsa. The Ganga has her source in the foot of Shri Vishnu; in the same manner the words of Gururaj also ultimately reside at the feet of Great Vishnu. The Ganges is full of deadly aquatic animals that can catch big and small creatures like elephants and insects. In the like manner the words of Shri Gururaj have tenets like the reality of the world. (जगत्सत्यत्व) difference between the soul

and the great Brahman, (जोवेश्वर भेद) Brahman's nature of having attributes and a scale of gradation which can check the current of tenets of perverted disputants. Thus the current of Gururaj's words which compares very favourably with the heavenly Ganges even in its purificatory function may also purify me thus he prays.

श्री राघवेन्द्रः सकलप्रदाता स्वपादकञ्जद्वयभक्तिमद्भः।

अघाद्रिसंभेदनदृष्टिवज्रः क्षमासुरेन्द्रोऽवतु मां सदायम् ॥ 3 ॥

May Shri Raghavendra, who fulfills all the desires of his devotees, who destroys a mountain of sins by the thunder bolt of his gracious look, who is the best of the Brahmins, protect us at all times.

श्रीराघवेन्द्रो हरिपादकञ्जनिषेवणाल्लव्य समस्तसंपत्।

देवस्वभावो दिविजद्रुमोऽयं इष्टप्रदो मे सततं स भूयात् ॥ 4 ॥

Gururaj who served Shri Narasimha, who is the incarnation of Shri Vishnu, who has attained certain powers, who, though born in the family of the Daityas, has attributes like devotion to Hari befitting the Gods, and who is the tree of desires fulfilling every desire of the devotees, may yield our desired object.

भव्यस्वरूपो भवदुःखतूल संघान्निचर्य सुखधैर्यशाली।

समस्तदुष्टग्रहनिग्रहेशो दुरत्ययोपप्लवसिन्नुसेतुः ॥ 5 ॥

निरस्तदोषो निरवद्यवेषः प्रत्यर्थिमूकत्वनिदानभाषः

विद्वत्परिज्ञेयमहाविशेषो वाग्वैखरीनिर्जितभव्यशेषः ॥ 6 ॥

संतानसम्पत्परिशुद्धभक्ति विज्ञानवाग्देहसुपाटवादीन्।

दत्त्वा शरीरोत्थसमस्तदोषान् हत्वा स नोऽव्याद् गुरुराघवेन्द्रः ॥

May Shri Gururaj who has the most auspicious form, who burns all the miseries of life as if they are merely cot-

ton, who is full of bliss and courage, who can exercise evil spirits, who helps to cross the ocean of troubles like a bridge, who is a holy and pious figure, who is able to stalemate all his opponents in the game of dispute, whose greatness is appreciated only by men of wisdom, who conquered his opponent Shesha by the skill he attained in the art of polemics by reading *Vagvaikhari*, a work by Shri Vijayendra Teertha and who thus by the skill of his speech has surpassed even *Adishesha*, may bless the devotees with good progeny, wealth, pure devotion to Hari. Knowledge of Truth, Oratorical powers and Health, and may remove all diseases the flesh is heir to.

यत्पादोदकसञ्चयस्सुरनदीमुख्यापगासादिता
 संख्यानुत्तमपुण्यसङ्घविलसत्प्रख्यातपुण्यावहः।
 दुस्तापत्रयनाशनो भुवि महाबन्ध्यासुपुत्रप्रदः
 व्यङ्ग स्वङ्गसमृद्धिदो ग्रहमहापापाह स्तं श्रये ॥ 7 ॥

This stanza deals with the efficacy of *Padodaka* of Shri Gururaja i.e. water with which the feet or padas of Shri Gururaja are washed. This *Padodaka* is more sacred than a bath in the Ganges and yields great religious merit. Person having physical disabilities will be fully cured of their ills and will regain the lost vigour by taking in a little quantity of it or by having bath with it *Paadodakasnana*. Even evil spirits run away, miseries and sins like *Brahmahatya* melt away and barren women become fertile. Such a great saint is worthy to be served.

यत्पादकञ्जरजसापरिभूषिताङ्गाः
 यत्पादपद्ममधुपायित मनसा ये॥
 यत्पादपद्मपरिकीर्तनजीर्णवाचः
 तद्दर्शनं दुरितकाननदावभूतम् ॥ 8 ॥

Those are the faithful devotees of Shri Raghavendra, who decorate their bodies with the dust, of the feet of Shri Gururaj (*Padadhulu*) who are constantly attached to his feet (to him), as the bees always hum round a lotus flower, and whose tongue is purified singing the praise of the lotus of his feet - Padapadma Parikeerthana. His very sight reduces all sins to ashes as conflagration reduces forests to ashes.

सर्वतत्र स्वतंत्रोसौ श्रीमध्वमतवर्धनः।

विजयींद्रकराब्जोत्थ सुधीन्द्रवरपुत्रकः ॥ 10 ॥

श्रीराघवेन्द्रो यतिराद् गुरु मे स्याद्भयापहः।

ज्ञानमक्ति सुपुत्रायुः यशः श्री पुण्यवर्धनः ॥ 11 ॥

He who has spread wide by commentary and discourses the tenets of Shri Madhva, who has attained proficiency in all branches of science depending upon none but himself, who was a spiritual heir to Shri Sudheendra Teertha who had been in his turn a heir again to Shri Vijayeendra Teertha, who again distributes blissful boons like knowledge devotion, good progeny, longevity, fame and wealth and religious merit among, the faithful devotees, averts all fears of the devoted and protects us.

प्रतिवादिजयस्वांतभेदचिन्हादरो गुरुः।

सर्वविद्याप्रवीणो ऽन्यो राघवेन्द्रः विद्यते ॥ 12 ॥

There is no other who is more expert in silencing the opponents than Shri Gururaj who by his skill in the art of polemical discussions in a sportive spirit, would discuss with them and convince them.

अपरोक्षीकृतश्रीशः समुपेक्षितभावजः

अपेक्षितप्रदाता ऽन्यो राघवेन्द्रात्र विद्यते ॥ 13 ॥

No other person is found than Shri Guru Raghavendra

to whom God has revealed himself in person, who has conquered his passions and showers blessings upon his devotees fulfilling their desires.

दयादाक्षिण्यवैराग्यवाक्पाटवमुखांकिः ।

शापानुग्रहशक्तोऽन्यो राघवेन्द्रात्र विद्यते ॥ 14 ॥

No other is there but Shri Raghavendra, who cannot bear ills done to anybody, who is compassionate to all, who remains steady in words, thoughts and deeds, who is endowed with such high qualities as practice of non-attachment, eloquence of high order etc. and who can exercise, if he so desires, powers of cursing and also blessings by redeeming the effect of curse.

अज्ञानविस्मृतिभ्रान्तिसंशयापस्मृतिक्षयाः

तन्द्राकम्पवचः कौण्डेयमुखा ये चेन्द्रियोद्भवाः ॥ 15 ॥

दोषास्ते नाशमायान्ति राघवेन्द्रप्रसादतः ।

His beneficence is proverbial as he removes graciously all ills and defects like dullness, forgetfulness, lunacy, suspicious nature and diseases like epilepsy, tuberculosis, indisposition, stammering, convulsions and defects of the senses.

ॐ श्रीराघवेन्द्राय नमः इत्यष्टाक्षरमन्त्रतः ।

जपिताद्भावितात्रित्यमिष्टार्थास्युर्न संशयः ॥ 16 ॥

One gets desires fulfilled if he daily meditates with the incantation of 'Om Shri Raghavendraya Namah'.

हन्तु नः कायजान् दोषानात्मात्मीयसमुद्भवान् ।

सर्वानपि पुमर्थांश्च ददातु गुरुरात्मवित् ॥ 17 ॥

इति कालत्रये नित्यं प्रार्थनां यः करोति सः ।

इहमुत्राप्यसर्वेष्टो मोदते नात्र संशयः ॥ 18 ॥

Shri Gururaj gifted with God-Vision, removes all bodily defects if one prays to him three times a day to do so and to grant him the four ends of life (चतुर्विधपुरुषार्थ) and he blesses those devotees with the desired objects.

अगम्यमहिमा लोके राघवेन्द्रो महायशः।

श्रीमध्वमतदुग्याव्यिचन्द्रो ऽवतु सदानघः ॥ 19 ॥

सर्वयात्राफलावाप्त्यै यथाशक्तिप्रदक्षिणम्।

करोमि तव सिद्धस्य बृन्दावनगतं जलम्॥

His ways are unfathomable and powers are unlimited. His fame has spread on all sides. He is the moon to the ocean of Dwaita Siddhanta of Shri Madhvacharya as he causes the tides in that ocean by his discourses, explanations and elucidations in the form of notes and criticisms. Such a Gururaja who is immune from defects and sins, may protect us.

शिरसा धारयाम्यद्य सर्वतीर्थफलाप्तये ॥ 20 ॥

सर्वाभीष्टार्थसिद्ध्यर्थम् नमस्कारं करोम्यहम्।

तव संकीर्तनं वेदशास्त्रार्थज्ञानसिद्ध्ये ॥ 21 ॥

The devotee entreatingly prays to him saying that he would go round the Brindavan with a faith that he would realise the fruit of pilgrimage to all holy places thereby, that he would bathe with the holy water with which Brindavana is washed believing that he would get all the benefits of bathing in the holy rivers and lakes, that he bows down to him with the certainty that he would be blessed with what he craves and that by chanting his names he would get through knowledge of the Shastras.

संसारोऽक्षयसागरे प्रकृतितोऽगाधे सदा दुस्तरे

सर्वाविद्यजलग्रहैरनुपमैः कामादिमंगाकुले॥

नानाविभ्रमदुर्गमे ऽमितभयस्तोमादिफेनोत्कटे

दुः खोत्कृष्टविषे समुद्धर गुरो मामग्नरूपं सदा ॥ 22 ॥

The devotees pray ever, that in this ocean of life unfathomable and rarely negotiable, full of evils as cruel as the aquatic animals, having big waves of passions full of eddies in the form of object of pleasures evil in nature but producing an illusion of happiness; full of foam of dangers filled with the poison of miseries of life born of primordial nature, always catching at a straw while sinking in this ocean, pray that they may be given a helping hand and saved.

राघवेन्द्रगुरुस्तोत्रं यः पठेद्भक्तिपूर्वकम्।

तस्य कुष्ठादिरोगाणां निवृत्तिस्त्वरयामवेत् ॥ 23 ॥

He who reads or recites this penegyric of Shri Raghavendra will have their dreadful diseases like epilepsy, leprosy etc., healed instantly.

अंधोऽपि दिव्यदृष्टिस्स्यादेडमूकोऽपि वाक्पतिः

पूर्णायुः पूर्णसम्पत्तिः स्तोत्रस्यास्य जपाद्भवेत् ॥ 24 ॥

Even a born blind reciting this eulogy will have divine vision and a dumb and a deaf man will recover his Power of hearing and speech and will be blessed with long life and prosperity.

यः पिवेज्जलमेतेन स्तोत्रेणैवाभिमन्त्रितम्।

तस्य कुक्षिगता दोषाः सर्वे नश्यन्ति तत्क्षणात् ॥ 24 ॥

One drinking the water charmed by the reciting of this Mantra will have all diseases of the stomach cured.

यद् वृन्दावनमासाद्य पंगुः खञ्जोऽपि वा जनः।

स्तोत्रेणानेन यः कुर्यात्प्रदक्षिणमस्कृतीः।

स जंघालुभविदेव गुरुराजप्रसादतः ॥ 25 ॥

If a cripple or a lame man goes round the Brindavan with prostrations at regular intervals, all his disabilities will get removed and he attains great proficiency in walking.

सोमसूर्योपरागेच पूष्या-कादिसमागमे।

योऽनुत्तममिदं स्तोत्रमष्टोत्तरशतं जपेत्।

भूतप्रेतपिशाचादिपीडा तस्यनजायते ॥ 26 ॥

One will get immunity from the troubles of evil spirits if, at the time of solar or lunar eclipse, or on sundays when the sun is in Pushya mansion he repeats this Guru Stotra 108 times.

एतत्स्तोत्रं समुच्चार्य गुरोर्बृन्दावनांतिके।

दीपसंयोजनाज्ज्ञानं पुत्रलाभो भवेद्भवम् ॥ 27 ॥

He who offers worship at the Brindavan Sannidhi with deepams will acquire pure knowledge and splendid progeny especially robust sons without fail.

परवादिजयो दिव्यज्ञानभक्त्याधिवर्धनम्।

सर्वाभीष्टप्रवृद्धिस्स्यान्नात्र कार्याविचारणा ॥ 28 ॥

By an enthusiastic recitation of this panegyric he will conquer his opponents in discussions of Shastras and his knowledge will increase. And he will attain all other covetable things and there is no doubt about this.

राजचोरमहाव्याघ्रसर्पनक्रादिपीडनम्।

नजायतेऽस्य स्तोत्रस्य प्रभावात्त्रात्रसंशयः ॥ 30 ॥

If one goes on constantly reciting this prayer of praise

he will have undoubtedly no harassment from petty princes or high way robbers, ferocious tigers, poisonous serpents and dreadful crocodiles.

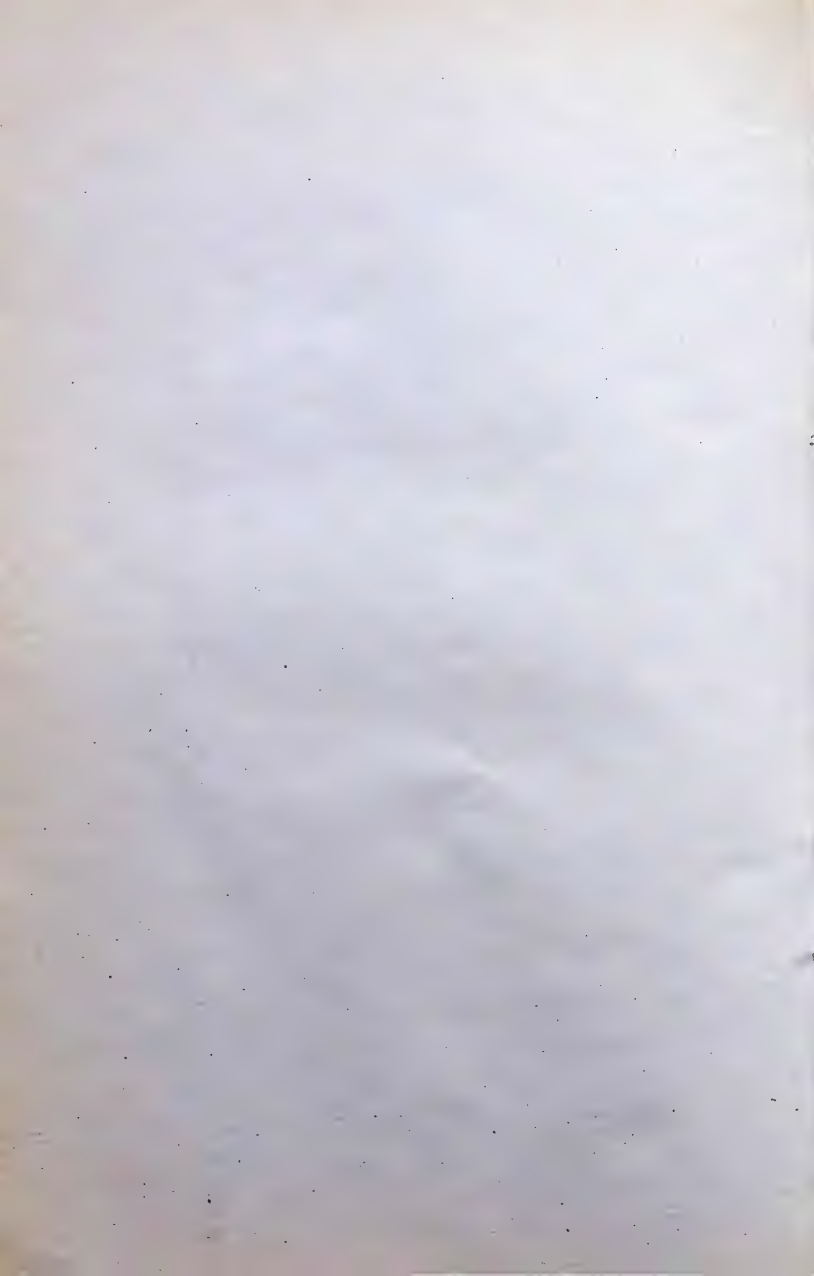
यो भक्त्या गुरुराघवेन्द्रचरणद्वन्द्वं स्मरन्त्यः पठेत्
स्तोत्रं दिव्यमिदं सदानि हि भवेत्तस्या सुखं किञ्चन ।
किन्ति चष्टार्यसमृद्धिरेव कमलानाथप्रसादोदयात्
कीर्तिर्दिग्विदिता विभूतिरतुला साक्षी हयास्योऽत्र हि ॥ 31 ॥

Whoever remembers Shri Gururaja with devotion, who constantly repeats this Guru Stotra he will never be touched by sorrows or miseries in life. Shri Gururaja will be highly pleased by this and fulfill their desires through the grace of God. They will get unsullied fame spread on all sides and immense wealth; God Hayagreeva alone stands testimony to all these things.

इति श्रीराघवेन्द्रार्यगुरुराजप्रसादतः ।
कृतं स्तोत्रमिदं पुण्यं श्रीमद्भिरप्यनामिधैः ॥

Thus the holy poem Composed in praise of Shri Gururaja by his grace by Shri Appannacharya comes to an end.

पूज्याय राघवेन्द्राय सत्यधर्मरताय च ।
भजतां कल्पवृक्षाय नमतां कामधेनवे ॥
मूकोऽपि यत्प्रसादेन मुकुन्दशयनायते ।
राजराजायते रिक्ते राघवेन्द्रं तमाश्रये ॥
दुर्वादिध्वांतरवये वैष्णवेन्दीवरेन्दवे ।
श्रीराघवेन्द्रगुरवे नमोत्यन्तदयालवे ॥
आपादमौलिपर्यन्तं गुरुणामाकृतिस्मरेत् ।
तेन विघ्नाः प्रणश्यन्ति सिध्यन्ति च मनोरथाः ॥
॥ इति श्रीराघवेन्द्रस्तोत्रं सम्पूर्णम् ॥



श्री राघवेन्द्रर मगलाष्टकम्

श्रीमद्रामपदारविन्दमधुपः श्रीमध्वंशाधिपः ।
सच्छिद्योरुगणोडुपः श्रितजगद्गीर्वाण सत्पादपः ॥
अत्यर्थं मनसा कृताच्युतजपः पापान्धाकरातपः ।
श्रीमत्सद्गुरुराघवेन्द्रयतिराट् कुर्याद्ध्रुवं मङ्गलम् ॥ 1 ॥

कर्मन्दीन्द्रसुधीन्द्रसद्गुरुकराम्मोजोद्भवस्सन्ततम् ।
प्राज्यध्यानवशीकृताखिलजगद्वास्तव्य लक्ष्मीधवः ॥
सच्छास्त्रातिविदूषकाखिलमृषावादीभकण्ठीरवः ।
श्रीमत्सद्गुरुराघवेन्द्रगुयतिराट् कुर्याद्ध्रुवं मङ्गलम् ॥ 2 ॥

सालङ्कारककाव्यनाटककलाकाणादपातञ्जल- ।
त्रैयर्थस्मृतिजैमिनीयकवितासंगीतपारंगतः ॥
विप्रक्षत्रबिड्भिजात मुखरानेकप्रजासेवितः ।
श्रीमत्सद्गुरुराघवेन्द्रयतिराट् कुर्याद्ध्रुवं मङ्गलम् ॥ 3 ॥

रङ्गोत्तुङ्गतरङ्गमङ्गलकर श्रीतुङ्गभद्रतट- ।
प्रत्यस्थद्विजपुङ्गवाललयलसन्मन्त्रालयारव्ये पुरे ॥
नव्येन्द्रोपलनीलभव्यकरसद्वृन्दावनान्तर्गतः ।
श्रीमत्सद्गुरु राघवेन्द्रयतिराट् कुर्याद् ध्रुवं मङ्गलम् ॥ 4 ॥
विद्वद्राजशिरः किरीटखचितानर्धयोरुत्तनप्रभा ।
रागाघौघहपादुकद्वयचरः पद्माक्षमालाधरः ॥
भास्वदण्डकमण्डलूज्वलकरः रक्ताम्बराडम्बरः ।
श्रीमत्सद्गुरुराघवेन्द्रयतिराट् कुर्याद्ध्रुवं मङ्गलम् ॥ 5 ॥

यद्वंदावनसप्रदक्षिणनमस्कारभिषेकस्तुति- ।

ध्यानाराधनमृदिलेपनमुखानेकोपचारान्सदा ॥

कारंकारमभिप्रयान्ति चतुरो लोकाः पुमर्थान्सदा ।

श्रीमत्सद्गुरुराघवेन्द्रयतिराट् कुर्याद्भुवं मंगलम् ॥ 6 ॥

वेदव्यासमुनीशमध्वयतिराष्ट्रिकार्यवाक्यामृतं ।

ज्ञात्वाऽद्वैतमतं हलाहलसमं त्यक्त्वा समाख्याप्तये ॥

संख्यावत्सुखदां दशोपनिषदां व्याख्यान्समाख्यान्मुदा ।

श्रीमत्सद्गुरुराघवेन्द्रयतिराट् कुर्याद्भुवं मंगलम् ॥ 7 ॥

श्रीमद्वैष्णवलोकजालकगुरुः श्रीमत्परिव्राड्भरुः ।

शास्त्रे देवगुरुः श्रितामरतरुः प्रत्यूहगोत्रस्वरुः ॥

चेतोतीतशिरुः तथाजितवरुः सत्सौख्यसम्पत्करुः ।

श्रीमत्सद्गुरुराघवेन्द्रयतिराट् कुर्याद्भुवं मंगलम् ॥ 8 ॥

यस्सन्ध्यास्वनिशं गुरो व्रतिपतेः सन्मङ्गलस्याष्टकं ।

सद्यः पापहरं त्वसेवि विदुषां भक्तैव बाभाषितम् ॥

भक्त्या वक्ति सुसम्पदं शुभपदं दीर्घायुरारोग्यकम् ।

कीर्तिं पुत्रकलत्रबांधवसुहृन्मूर्तीः प्रयाति ध्रुवम् ॥ 9 ॥

इति श्री अप्पणाचार्य विरचित श्रीराघवेन्द्र मङ्गलाष्टकम्

सम्पूर्णम्

॥ श्री कृष्णार्पणमस्तु ॥



JAGADGURU SRI RAGHAVENDRA SWAMY